The Secret Place of Prayer

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by

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INTRODUCTION

There are books and books. Men stand on the side lines watching the game of life and go off to write a book on what they have seen. In the field of religious experience men study the technique and the science of communion with the Infinite, of prayer. The science of any subject can and must be studied; the art thereof must be learned by experience. And if art is the power of adapting means to desired ends, the power of successful performance, is it possible to exaggerate the importance of communion with God as a necessary element of the godly life?

Dr. Goodwin's qualifications for writing this treatise on prayer are apparent to all who have had the privilege of being somewhat intimately acquainted with him. His thoroughness as a student and his aptness for clear and independent thinking guarantee the correctness of his statements regarding the science of prayer. And most important of all, his godly walk, his practice of the presence of God, his first-hand knowledge of the hidden mysteries of the deep things of God have made him, to a remarkable degree, an example for us to follow, as he practices the art of prayer and as the divine Presence lives through him.

The author's life has been a benediction to many. May this volume increase his sphere of influence and lead thousands out and away from the shallows into the depths of God's love and grace.

P. H. LUNN.

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FOREWORD

I do not claim any especial originality for the matter of this book. I have read many books on prayer and have thus been greatly helped. However with all that has been said and written to encourage prayer, which is all so vital and important, yet it has seemed to me that there has not been sufficient emphasis on right conditions of the heart, proper attitudes, and spiritual relationships in the exercise of prayer. It has been my thought to strengthen this point in the writing of this book.

I have tried in various ways to call attention to the fact that real prayer is more especially communion with God, rather than vocal utterances and that all vocal utterances are as nothing without right conditions in holy communion. Quiet communion with God has been the strength of my life for over forty years. Early in my experience I learned the habit of secret or quiet communion with God. Soon after my conversion I commenced a study of the Bible with my concordance, often remaining on my knees with my open Bible until the morning hours. Not wishing to disturb others, I formed the habit of quiet secret prayer alone with God. While traveling and living in hotels and rooms this has been an untold blessing in my life. I have been able to exercise this precious secret of quiet communion in public places amid the roar and rattle of depots and busy streets. To be thus shut away from the rattle of life and alone with God is the greatest of all blessings in my life. It is better doubtless to find a secret place in real quiet for meditation and devotion, but when this is impossible, to be able to pray clear through

in faith under unfavorable conditions is very gracious indeed.

Worship to be real worship must be something more than beautiful forms with exact prayers and songs. For worship to be really beautiful, the heart must be right with God. The heart must flow in sincere loyalty and devotion to God alone. Deep humility and full dependence upon God for all things, with dogged faithfulness in implicit obedience, can never fail to obtain divine attention. Prayer changes things, for real prayer will always largely change the heart of the true worshiper. Much of the human effort in prayer is in bringing the worshiper into right conditions in order that holy communion may be possible. It was hard indeed for Jacob of old to yield and confess his name which was the revelation of his native weakness, for Jacob meant "a supplanter," but after the confession it did not take long for God to bless him there.

It has well been said that our God is not a God of circumstances but a God of conditions. Even the material world is made up of laws and conditions and adjustments. The blessings received from the material world around us are conditioned on our adjustments with right conditions and proper relationships. It is largely so in the world of spiritual life. If we would enjoy the sunshine and smile of God's presence, we must come out of the shade of doubt and questions. If we are to reap the harvest in answered prayer we must sow the seed of divine Truth and cultivate the crop in loyal devotion. If we are to become spiritually strong we must exercise our faith and spiritual muscles of determination and undertake larger things for God and the salvation of the world. It has been

said, "Fanaticism is trying to obtain the ends without the means." If this statement is true, and it would seem to be, then I fear there is more real fanaticism than we had supposed. For it must be admitted that many are trying to get their prayers through without right heart conditions and proper adjustments as revealed in the Word of God.

The heavens have been open ever since Pentecost for all true believers. The storehouse of divine supplies has been filled and overflowing with all our needs, conditioned only on our faith and obedience. But we must know what faith is and study how to eliminate all false conditions from the heart and thought, and thus adjust our attitudes, if results are to be obtained in answer to prayer. Some readers may feel that some of my statements are repeated, but it has been my desire to consider conditions under various relationships and thus to remove as far as possible hindrances in the exercise of prayer.

I shall gladly dedicate this book to the life and experience of my beloved wife who has lived such a devoted life of prayer. She has always said in every trying hour throughout our experience of forty years, "We have always trusted God and we always will." May these words bless those who read. If we, as spiritual people, can only learn the true art of prayer, the great revival for which we are praying will be increased and intensified until this glorious gospel of full salvation shall be carried to the ends of the earth to make ready a people for the Lord at His most glorious appearing.

JOHN W. GOODWIN.

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The Secret Place of Prayer

CHAPTER I

THE SECRET PLACE OF PRAYER

"He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty" (Psa. 91:1).

As we enter the secret place of the most High, we must pass the realm of mystery from the standpoint of materialism. We shall not attempt to deny that there are mysteries in the ministry of faith and prayer; but on the other hand, in all scientific investigation in the realm of matter the world is filled with mysteries. We hope, however, to discover laws of results that will work in the life of faith and prayer, which will change us and things so God can do what He could not do without our co-operation.

We are not unmindful that some scientific minds have reasoned thus: If there is a God, He must be infinite, and how can the Infinite come in touch with such finite creatures of earth? How can He who created worlds be bothered with such trifling things of earthly prattle? Or again: Such an infinite Being must be unchangeable. How can this unchangeable God, who fixed the laws of nature, change His plans and purposes in answer to the prayer of such mortals as we, with our childish desires? The conclusion of course would be,

What profit is there that we pray unto Him? The last analysis of this reasoning seems to conclude, "It is vain to call on God."

Some critics will admit that the exercise of prayer is indeed ennobling and uplifting, and for this reason prayer may be encouraged. They admit that in the exercise of prayer man is awakened to the loftiest ideals and stirred to undertake noble deeds of love and mercy; that while in the exercise of Christian prayer the heart is uplifted in moral rectitude and righteous attitudes, and thus man is strengthened in his consecration, courage and fortitude. All of this is indeed sufficient to encourage the exercise of prayer and holy communion. However, we need not be over-anxious with such reasonings, for the simplicity of God is wiser than the wisdom of this world. The simplest thoughts of God are wiser than the deepest and most profound thinking of man. Or as the Apostle Paul states it: "The foolishness of God is wiser than men."

ANOTHER VIEW

It is important indeed that we hold correct views concerning the nature and being of God. That the true God must be infinite, eternal, self-existent, omnipotent, all-wise, omnipresent, and the Supreme Ruler of the universe, must be clear to all. That He is no less than a Supreme Being, a divine Person, infinite in life, light, love and truth, is the Christian concept of God as our heavenly Father. He is not only infinite in His nature and attributes, but as the Infinite One, He must be infinitely interested in His love and care for His creatures made in His own image. When we behold the mighty works of His hand in the wonders of the starry heavens above us; His infinite wisdom in the multitudinous works

of His creation as seen in His creatures which inhabit land and ocean depths; the minuteness of His thoughts and plans in the beauties of the tinted flowers, rich with gorgeous colors of an infinite variety; the exactness with which He has combined elements in the laws of nature in conditions and results; it would seem indeed astonishing and even unthinkable, if this infinite Creator should leave the greatest of all His created beings made in His own image, man, without care and comfort. The God who created the gigantic mastodon of the wild forests, also created the tiny ant with its wonderful instinct. The God who made the great eagle with its strange genius in the airy heights, is the same God who gave the honey bee its marvelous instinctive wisdom. When we view the heavens above us with all the stars, planets, satellites and suns, we exclaim, "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth his handiwork." But all this is no more wonderful than the invisible atom and electron, the very substance of the material world.

Best of all, this infinite God of creation is our Father-God. "Over all and through all and in you all." Our Father-God is just as infinite in His love and care for us, made in His image, as He is in the works of nature. This is the revelation of our Lord concerning our heavenly Father. "If God so clothe the grass of the field," with all the minuteness of its tinted glory, "shall he not much more clothe you?" Not a sparrow can fall to the ground without His notice; will God care for birds and forget man made in His own image? Our Lord declared "the very hairs of your head are all numbered." That is a clear revelation that our Father-God is interested in all the details of our lives. No one would even think of

missing a spear of hair, and yet God is interested in the very smallest and most insignificant matters which enter into our lives. O glorious fact! What a precious revelation of the infinite interest of our loving heavenly Father in every detail of our daily living. How can we neglect prayer, or fail to commune with One so near and so concerned in our well-being? Thus we may understand how important is the realization of the divine presence in the life of prayer. Hence it will be needful to give this subject a more careful consideration in another chapter.

DIVINE TEACHING

The Holy Scriptures abound in records of prayers and the lives of praying men. Communion with God graced the garden of Eden in the early life of Adam and Eve, until sin drove them from the divine presence. Prayer crowned the life of Enoch as he walked with God for those three hundred wonderful years of unbroken communion. Prayer with communications from God was not only a known fact, but they fill a large place in the records of the lives of Noah and his descendants, and becomes a chief characteristic in the noble life of Abraham. This great man of early days became the friend of God, and built altars of devotion in his earthly pilgrimage. Unto Abraham the angels communicated the divine message from time to time, while he never faltered in his faith and obedience. Moses lived in constant realization of the presence of God and his life was filled with holy communication with the unseen One who journeyed with them in the wilderness. Thus from the beginning to the end the history of the prophets is filled with recorded prayers and revelations of the divine presence.

Someone has said that prayer is unscientific. How

can that be? God is surely the Author of His creation. He has established laws in the natural world for a wide communication of sound by the radiation of electrical waves. Could He not establish laws of communion in the spiritual world? We feel sure that He has, and He has made known these facts in His Revelation, and demonstrated them to the sons of men in the life and ministry of His own Son. Prayer is a natural instinct to man as truly as hunger or thirst. Reason would declare that this capacity for fellowship with God must be satisfied in communion with God. As truly as the eye was made for sunlight, as hunger can be satisfied with food, so just as really man's hunger and thirst after God may be satisfied in sweet communion with his heavenly Father. As truly as the eye is filled with light, so man's faith may be filled with the conscious realization of the divine presence.

MAN, A PRAYING CREATURE

It must be admitted by all that prayer is as natural to man as breathing. It seems to have been born with him. Man, as we know him, from the whimpering cry for food on his mother's breast, through the boyhood days at his mother's side asking for bread and on into young manhood, accepting parental care and protection, he lives a life of prayer. This inward sense of dependent plea is only lost in the reckless blundering of the wandering sinful heart away from its parental loving Father—God.

Someone has said that man is a religious animal. Man is more than an animal for he is in the image of God; thus he longs for and would feel after God if haply he might find Him.

Prayer is natural to man and he cannot get away

from it. Wherever man has been found, he has practiced some kind of worship and religious exercise which might be termed prayer. His face naturally turns upward with imploring desire. If this sense of dependence and aspiration for higher and better things is stifled and deadened, man soon becomes careless, reckless, and like a wandering star, has lost the center of true life. Harmony and true communion with God are the proper adjustments of the whole being with the eternal laws to hold man in his right relationship with spiritual life and the development of character.

HARMONY

When the prayer life becomes faint and weakened by selfish interests, spiritual life begins to wane and the once glowing experience loses its radiant beauty. We cannot begin to really pray until the whole heart is truly yielded to the sweet will of God. The cry of the true repentant soul is the earnest prayer for correct adjustment with God. The proud and haughty in spirit, filled with self-justification, cannot really worship for they are held by invisible cords "afar off."

True prevailing prayer is right adjustment and union with God; harmony of will, heart and desire, with the eternal laws of spiritual life. Human struggling in prayer is more of an effort on our part to adjust relationships and bring the whole nature up in harmony with the higher state of being. Man away from God is lost and out of harmony with himself and the world about him. In this maze of doubt and fear he sees nothing clearly. He is a wandering star out of harmony with the eternal center of his being.

Prayer holds one in beautiful harmony with God.

Thus being in harmony with the will of God, all life is made easy. Soul peace becomes a river ever deepening and widening into the mighty stream of true satisfaction and holy delight. This gracious harmony with God brings peace and contentment. "In union with the purest One I find my heaven on earth begun." "O wondrous bliss, O joy sublime, I've Jesus with me all the time."

BREATH OF LIFE

Prayer is as vital to spiritual life as breathing is to physical life. There is a deep meaning in that utterance of Paul in the Acts of the Apostles when he was discoursing on Mars Hill concerning the unknown God. To bring this unknown God into close relationship with their thinking, he exclaimed: "In him we live and move and have our being." Our attention is thus called to our dependence upon the Infinite for our very existence. And in another place we read, "If he [God] should withdraw his breath, all flesh would perish together." Mere physical life is a far more dependent life than many seem to understand. Spiritual life, which is harmony with God, must be far more dependent upon right relations with God than even physical life. No one would think of trying to live without breathing, neither could we think of spiritual life without prayer.

In physical culture they tell us that we should take deep breathing to invigorate the body. If we would become strong and rugged disciples of the Lord, we must breathe more frequently and more constantly the ozone of heavenly atmosphere, of loyal devotion, and live in the higher altitudes of divine Presence.

In that wonderful prophecy of our Lord in Isa. 11: 1-3, it is stated that "And shall make him of quick under-

standing in the fear of the Lord." A noted Hebrew scholar has rendered this text as follows: "He shall draw his breath in the fear of God."

As we study the prayer life of our Lord, we understand more fully the meaning of this expression. The presence of His Father was so real and so constant that it was to Him, His very breath of life. Thus we are taught to "Pray without ceasing and in everything give thanks." We shall understand this better when we more fully realize our dependence upon God for all things and our need of harmonious adjustments with His nature and will and the opportunities needful to exercise constant consciousness of the divine Presence.

BREAD OF LIFE

Someone has said, "Tell me what you eat and I will tell you what you are." Just so, my friend; tell me what you read and on what you meditate and I can tell what you are in your spiritual life. In that awful moment of need when hunger was gnawing at the physical consciousness of our Lord in the wilderness, on being invited by Satan to turn the stones into bread, to satisfy His craving for food, He readily exclaimed: "Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Here our Lord testified of the supremacy of the spirit. Life to Him was more than meat and drink. Harmony with the laws of God in the prayer life will turn truth into strength, righteousness into courage, purity into power, and confidence in God's Word into action and mighty achievements for God and righteousness. Our Lord when weary and even hungry by the way, while waiting for the disciples to bring bread, found an

opportunity to bless another, and He became so interested, that when invited to eat, He exclaimed, "I have meat that you know not of," and in another expression He revealed the source of His true strength. "My meat and my drink is to do the will of him that sent me and to finish his work."

When the soul is adjusted to the perfect will of God in holy communion, meditation on truth has a mighty transforming force. Like the gastric juices in the digestive system, it transforms communion with God into honey wafers and the denunciation against sin into commendations for righteousness. Trials and difficulties and the other things which seem to work against us are transformed into a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. In holy communion, God's Word and will are sweeter than honey and the honeycomb.

In these holy moments of prayer before the Lord, we find the secret of this expression, "Wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart, wait, I say, on the Lord."

SOME MYSTERIES

It must be admitted that there are some mysteries in the life of prayer. A full explanation of all the mysteries may never be given with complete satisfaction in this world. Why some prayers are answered and others are not; why even some good people seemingly do not have their prayers answered; why it is easy to pray at one time and at another there seems little spirit of prayer; may be questions hard to answer. Yet, we should not be discouraged, for we live in a world of mystery. Life is a mystery in the midst of infinite mysteries.

WE ARE TAUGHT TO PRAY

There are many things which we can know and there are many things to be enjoyed. Let us know what we can know and enjoy that which is to be enjoyed. Our Lord has taught us to pray both by example and precept. By precept He has commanded us to pray. "Pray without ceasing." "Men ought always to pray and not to faint." "Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find." "Ask that your joy may be full." "Whatsoever ye ask in my name." His parables and illustrations abound in teachings on the line of prayer. By His own example He has taught us the art of prayer. At His baptism "as he was praying, the heavens opened" and the Spirit descended. Before He entered upon His public ministry, "He went out and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed." There in the wilderness He fasted and prayed forty days and nights. Then the record adds, "He returned, . . . in the power of the Spirit." In the choice of His disciples, "He went into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God." After a hard day of toil with much to do on the following day, we find Him again on the hill side alone in prayer to His Father for strength and power to accomplish His work. Remember also the great confession as given in Luke 9:18 and 20 came as a result of His prayer. "And it came to pass, as he was alone praying, his disciples were with him: and he asked them saying, Whom say the people that I am." Thus we may see the burden of His prayer, namely, that His own might know Him. Peter's reply, "Thou art the Christ," was an answer to His prayer. Note His reply, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." Now turn to Luke 9:28-36, "He took Peter

and James and John, and went up into a mountain to pray. And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered . . . and there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son, hear him." Then that oft repeated request of His disciples, "Lord, teach us to pray," came as a result of His devotion, "As he was praying in a certain place" (Luke 11:1-13). To close this thought we should not fail to mention the greatest of all prayers recorded in the Scriptures, as given in the 17th of John. Here we have a revelation of our Lord's full dependence upon His Father for all the great accomplishments of His ministry, past, present and future. Here He asks for His own glory and the glory of His church, that His own might be kept from the world and from all evil, that His own might be sanctified through the truth with all who might believe on Him through their word. Then before He suffered on the cross, He spent much time alone in the garden in prayer, "And being in agony he prayed the more earnestly." How little we have prayed. How slow we have been to believe in prayer and exercise this wondrous privilege. As I write, my heart throbs to be forgiven for all carelessness in this blessed life of prayer and devotion.

THE SECRET PLACE

The secrets of the Lord are with them who fear Him. There is a secret place where prayer is perfectly natural, and where communion with God is as constant as the heart throbs. It is called "the secret place of the most High" where one may abide under the shadow of the Almighty. Our Lord called it "the closed closet" where all but God is shut out from our view. "But thou when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut

thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly."

This place is alone with God; where all worldliness of every kind is forbidden. A secret place where the heart throbs with perfect adjustment with all the sweet will of God. A place where there is deep humility and trust in God only for the answer. A secret place where the mind's door is shut to all clamoring voices which would draw our attention away from faith in God alone. A secret place where the will by strong determination fully closes every door to the heart against all suggestions of doubt and fear, or whisperings of Satan to question the faithfulness of God to keep His Word. This holy secret place of the most High, the closet of our heart's secret union with God, gives blessed assurance of the precious will of our Father. Here is where we may enjoy that blessed satisfaction that our ways please the Lord, while we ask for that which is pleasing in His sight. Right here in this poise of heart we may have conscious realization that because we ask in harmony with His will our prayer has been heard, and will be answered for we have by living faith in God alone that for which we pray.

O blessed rest, O peace divine:
Thine eternal fulness ever free;
Thy blessed will shall all be mine
While living faith claims victory.

SECRET PRAYER

When we are weary, we seek rest for our bodies. When our Lord was weary, He went alone to pray. As we enter the secret place of the most High, we shall find that quiet communion with God is a body builder as well

as a source of soul strength. A quiet hour alone with God in meditation and prayer will often give more strength, and more satisfying invigoration than a vacation spent without God. Try a little secret prayer and waiting on the Lord for "thy body's sake and thine often infirmities." Commune with thine own heart. "Be still and know that I am God." Learn to quietly pray and commune with God in the silent night, or alone in the chambers of rest. Hush, be still, God is here, let all the earthly voices keep silence. God is in His holy temple of worship. Here we shall know the sweetness of that prayer, "the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you."

AGREEMENT IN PRAYER

Many have often missed the force of prayer because their minds have been filled with the idea that prayer was merely uttered words or expressed desires, when in reality effectual prayer is largely made up of facts, verities, heart conditions, proper adjustments and harmonious relationships with God; combined with a flowing desire from a trustful, loyal soul, moved by faith. Thus we may understand how two or more in perfect agreement may create conditions which will give God sufficient faith and harmonious relationships so He can operate in answer to the prayers of His people. Thus we have the promise, "Where two of you shall be agreed on earth as touching any one thing it shall be done." We are sometimes mistaken in the force of prayer, for man looketh upon the outward appearance, but God looketh upon the heart. It is with the heart that a man prayeth as well as believeth. As we shall have opportunity to take up this question later, we will leave this thought for a larger development in the following chapters.

CONCERT PRAYING

Without doubt, one of the mysteries which has caused much criticism from those on the outside of the circle of prayer has been the practice of concert praying among spiritual people. With a number of people all praying at the same time, it seems confusing and very often brings little or no seeming results. However, with earnest worshipers it is very difficult to control or suppress emotion when moved by an all persuasive passion to unite with others in an effort to bring something to pass. Concert praying was practiced in Old Testament times and is still used among the orthodox Jews. This seems also to have been the method in the fourth chapter of the Acts practiced by the early Church. The record states, "They all lifted up their voices in one accord." As a result of this mighty praying moved, by humility and faith, in this "one-accordness," "the place was shaken," the heavens *were* opened and a mighty manifestation of spiritual power came upon them all.

We fear much time and effort are lost in this exercise, because no attention is given to heart unity, and no effort is made for the concentration of purpose and desire, and because no attention is given to a oneness of united faith. All too often this exercise ends in a confusion instead of a confession of faults, and in a mere racket instead of the place being shaken with revival power.

If the worshipers could hold their attention to just one desire and concentrate their faith for just one object much more might be accomplished. Instead of all praying one prayer as did the disciples in the fourth chapter of the Acts, "lifting up the voice in one accord," all seem to lift up their own voices in different prayers in great *dis-*

cord. When someone is leading the prayer, if all could follow in united and harmonious responsiveness, holding steadily in faith with the leader in prayer, instead of running off into individual prayers which often confuse the real worshipers, we should without doubt realize greater spiritual benefits. It must be very clear to all that there can be no special blessing in concert praying unless there is better unity of purpose and desire with united faith and devotion. There must be harmony, a oneness, a one-accord-ness, with all discordant voices hushed, in one holy, united, harmonious pouring forth of sincere desire moved by faith, for lasting results. But the promise is ours, with agreement, "where two are agreed," "they were all of one accord," "they lifted up their voice with one accord," the place *was* shaken, they *were* all filled, it shall *be done* unto you of my Father.

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Blessed is that home which is graced with a family altar of daily devotion; where the children are gathered around the family circle, the Bible read, then on bended knee in simple devotion with prayer and thanksgiving, all remain in worship in the quiet hour. The children may be scattered into distant lands, but they will never forget those sacred moments before the throne in the presence of God around the family altar. Fathers and mothers are missing a great opportunity when they allow the family altar to be torn down, and in its place rear the altar of Baal with trashy reading, novels and even some popular magazines. How our great nation of fathers and mothers need to return to the paths which the founders have trod, and build again the family altar which is torn down by cheap literature, and build again the altar fires of daily

devotion in the homes of our people. O for a mighty revival of family altar religion, which will become a great force in molding our nation in righteousness.

Sweet hour of prayer, sweet hour of prayer
That calls me from a world of care,
And bids me at my Father's throne,
Make all my wants and wishes known.
In seasons of distress and grief,
My soul has often found relief,
And oft escaped the tempter's snare,
By thy return, sweet hour of prayer.

Sweet hour of prayer, sweet hour of prayer
Thy wings shall my petition bear
To Him whose truth and faithfulness
Engage the waiting soul to bless;
And since He bids me seek His face,
Believe His Word, and trust His grace,
I'll cast on Him my every care,
And wait for thee, sweet hour of prayer.

CHAPTER II

"IN THE SECRET OF HIS PRESENCE"

"In the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me" (Psalm 27:5).

God, who is the infinite One, must transcend the limits of time, and is therefore eternal; as infinite He must transcend the limits of space, therefore He is everywhere present. Omnipresence is one of the divine attributes in the perfection of the infinite Being. "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence?" In that broad theological sense God's presence fills all space and all time. The Psalmist exclaims, "If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me." Thus we are taught of the infinite presence of God.

No one fact is lost to our consciousness so fully as the fact of God's omnipresence. This great truth is not only full of warning for the disobedient, "For all things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do;" but it is laden with the sweetest comfort for those whose hearts are perfect with God. How precious these words: "The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth to show himself strong in behalf of those whose hearts are perfect." Nothing can harm us or separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. "Trials, sorrows and disappoint-

ments may overwhelm us; weariness may close our eyes for a time, but when I awake I am still with thee," is the glad acclaim of one who had tasted the bitter cup, amid the lonely hours in this world. To realize that our God is almighty, nothing too hard for Him, "All things are possible with God," is very wonderful indeed; but to have a full realization that this wonderful God is present, right here, above all, and through all, and in you all, is the acme of all spiritual attainments, the very fullness of Him that filleth all and in all.

DIVINE PRESENCE AND PERSONALITY

Presence bespeaks personality. Our God is a Spirit, but no less a person. Throughout divine revelation our God is represented as the "Great I Am," the ever-present, self-existent eternal One; the author of our being and the wisdom of creation. The recognition of His personality is imperative to any realization of His holy presence. To regard the eternal One in any sense as a part of His creation, or as some blind force working in matter, is to destroy all hope of any realization of spiritual presence. In our coming to God we must "believe that he is," and that He is a faithful rewarder of all true seekers. We can not dissociate presence and a true conception of personality. Wherever we find personality we also find a strange halo of presence. Even with the limitations of human personality there is a marked mystic circle of presence. Then how much more real must be the divine presence in the realm of the infinite Spirit untrammeled by the material limitations of finite transitory conditions.

So often, and to many, God seems far off. The clouds hang low. The heavens seem brass and there is no open vision. Darkness seems to enshroud the divine

presence, and the soul is like one groping for the wall in the midst of blindness. Having eyes they see not, and in their doubting fear, cry in sore distress, "Where is thy God?" How then shall we harmonize the fact of God's omnipresence with such well known experiences? How can it be that one man may always enjoy such pleasure in the presence of God, while another man, not two feet away can see nothing and feels nothing of interest? There is a reason and we shall see. What was the difference between the young prophet and Elisha? Elisha, the prophet of God, was calm and peaceful, knowing and realizing the presence of God; while the young man seemed filled with fear and trembling. As the older prophet prayed that the young man's eyes might be opened, like a flash this young prophet exclaimed, "The mountains are filled with horses and chariots, and they that be with us are more than they that be with them." "Their eyes were withholden." What does that expression mean? Not that they would not, or could not, but they did not because they were not looking aright. Often our eyes are withholden because we are looking in the wrong direction or with a wrong conception of the object. We can never see spiritual things with a material gaze. The world can not see because they have eyes only for material things.

THE SECRET OF HIS PRESENCE

There may be quite a difference between the fact of His all-presence, and the conscious realization of His presence in spiritual vision. God is none the less real although our eyes may not see Him. The cause is not with God, but with our own vision. Many see little or nothing in the midst of wonderful scenery, because their

eyes are holden by prejudice, or lack of attention; or because their eyes are filled with other visions less important. There is a place in the secret chambers where there is only room for two feet to press the holy pavements of their narrow passage, lighted with the white light of purity, when the soul steps out alone with God to be led by the unseen hand of divine Presence into the higher altitudes of those heavenly places in Christ.

We must not think that God has departed because we can not see or feel. We should remember that God is nigh unto those who are of a broken and contrite heart. While our hearts are with Him, He is with us. There is a way through the clouds, there is a method by which all fog and mist may be driven back for the realization of His most glorious presence.

THE SECRET PLACE

The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him. The eternal verities are unaffected by human attitudes. We may see or not see, we may hear or not hear, but this does not change the facts of divine Being. Pharaoh did not see God in the ten plagues, but this did not change the facts. Cain did not see the smile of God upon Abel, but the devoted soul of Abel heard the divine testimony just the same. God was in the cloud and pillar of fire which accompanied the children of Israel. To the Egyptians there was nothing but darkness, blackness. But to the people of Israel, God was the illumination of this glorious emblem of divine presence.

THE OPEN HEAVEN

God clearly made known unto His people that disobedience would close heaven, and shut away from them His divine presence. If they refused to walk in His com-

mandments and do them, heaven would become brass over their heads and the earth iron beneath their feet. When they turned from His holy purpose the heavens were closed, the prophets could get no direct word from God. "The word of the Lord was precious in those days, for there was no open vision." The prophet Ezekiel found the divine combination which opened the heavens, as he informs us in his first chapter and first verse. "The heavens were opened and I saw visions of God." The prophets found this secret through holy communion and in earnest prayer before the Lord, they received answers from God and revelations of divine truth.

The heavens seemed closed for nearly four hundred years, until John baptized and sounded forth the message of repentance. When Jesus the Nazarene came to John's baptism "the heavens were opened unto John and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove," and lighting upon the Son of God. The promise was given, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost." As this one came from the water the heavens were opened and, lo, a voice from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." The record is clear as to the method by which the heavens opened. "As he was praying the heavens were opened." Thus our Lord by example taught us the holy secret of spiritual communication through holy communion.

The artist has drawn a wonderful picture of our Lord. Alone on the mountain side, surrounded by trees and shrubbery, kneeling at a large rock for His altar; with clasped hands and upturned face, in deep devotion, in earnest prayer alone with God. The clouds seemed rolled away and the bursting light from above streamed

with golden rays upon the Son of God. The heavens seemed opened when this man of Galilee prayed. This is no mere imagination of the artist. It was real to life. When human eyes were open they could see it in all its reality. Alone on the mountain, this very One was praying. His disciples were not far away. While He was praying His countenance was changed, His raiment became as white as snow. The very heavens were opened and celestial light of the Father's presence broke through and enveloped His being. This was in harmony with His promise, "Hereafter shall ye see the heavens opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." On the day of Pentecost the heavens were really opened. The gospel of our Lord is a message of the open heavens and a pledge of divine presence with us and within us. "Lo, I am with you alway." "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst." "My Father and I will come unto him and make our abode with him." "I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you." With the heaven opened we may have the Holy Spirit, the other Comforter, with us, and as promised within us.

IN EXPERIENCE

It is not difficult to know how this is brought about in experience. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him." "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." Speaking of the presence of the Holy Spirit, Christ said "Whom the world can not receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him." "What man knoweth the things of a man save the spirit

of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man but by the Spirit of God." "When he, the Spirit of truth, is come he shall receive of mine and show it unto you." "The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." He hath given us of His Spirit, "That we might know the things that are freely given us of God." How may we know our standing in justification which brings us into the family of God as His children? By the witness of the Spirit. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." We would also know our state and the deeper work of cleansing in sanctification. This is made known by the Spirit. "By one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." "Whereof the Holy Ghost is witness to us." This inward illumination by the Holy Ghost, when the carnal mind has been destroyed, takes away the color blindness and allows heavenly sunlight to fill every part. Spiritual things are compared with spiritual experiences. Now in this blessed experience God is real, and Christ is ever present; He becomes the same yesterday, today, and forever.

SECRETS

All nature is filled with secrets. The beneficent currents of electrical energy which light our cities and homes are filled with strange secrets. We know the laws of their production and control, but who knows the hidden secrets behind these laws? We may know and enjoy the benefits of the radio, but who can tell the mystery, the "why" and "how" of it all? Nature's secrets are contained in the combinations which produce the results. By continued investigation man has stumbled onto these strange combinations in nature, and thus many of our modern inven-

tions have come to light. Often, while seeking something else, man has found the key which unlocked the resources of nature in other directions. While trying to improve the telephone, man came across the radio.

There are great spiritual laws which govern the spiritual world. God has very kindly revealed some of these secrets to His own. "He revealeth his secrets to his servants." "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him." Hence, we shall discover that moral and spiritual tempers and attitudes are combinations which unlock some of the divine secrets.

One may exclaim, "The heavens were brass over my head," while another not ten feet away declares, "The heavens were opened and I saw visions of God." God did not change, but spiritual relations were changed by the difference in the attitude of the individuals. Christ made known this great truth when He said, "If any man shall do his will, he shall know of the doctrine." Here the conditions of the heart are the combinations which open the heavens and realize to our consciousness the presence of God. To refuse to comply with known conditions is to lock heaven to our own soul, and to shut out the presence of God. To those who fear and serve God, He becomes real, and the eternal verities are as evident as material realities.

"There's a secret, precious secret,
God has whispered to my soul.
'Tis that He will ever keep me,
While eternal ages roll.

"There's a secret God has whispered
To His hidden ones alone;
'Tis a secret, sweeter, stranger,
Than my heart has thought or known.

"Holy secret, how it cleanses
All the heart from self and sin;
Crowding out the power of evil
By the life of Christ within.

"Mighty secret, how it brings us
Heavenly help for hearts forlorn;
Turns our battle-tide to triumph,
Changes midnight into morn."

SPIRITUAL PRESENCE RĒAL

The great "I AM" changes never. "He is the same yesterday, today and forever." It remains only that man shall be quickened into spiritual consciousness through regeneration and sanctification in order that he may know and realize the glorious beauty of the divine immanence. When our hearts are adjusted, "fixed," put in tune with the Infinite; God is no longer millions of miles away, and His presence among the stars, but right here, ever present, a glorious reality. One noted scientist declared "God is nowhere." This seemed true to him for the blindness of his heart, and because of his heart condition. He simply got the letter misplaced. He had the space between the "O" and the "W" when it should have been between the "W" and the "H," "God is now here."

To know and realize the conscious presence of God and enjoy His fellowship is the victory of life. But the divine nature can only be made known to us in that part of our nature which is like His. You can not demonstrate

the transparency of glass or a diamond through an opaque stone. You can not give the evidence of light by the manifestation of darkness. There must be harmony of quality and nature for like manifestations. Hence to really know God and be conscious of His presence, sin must be banished from our nature as well as from our habits of life. There must be a purging of our nature, a cleansing of our desires and affections; the heart must be made clean from pride, jealousy, anger, worldly bent and selfish desires, that the white light of divine presence may radiate through the transparency of our being.

To enjoy the fullness of life, which is life indeed, the conscious presence of God must become a reality. Not only must we believe that there is a God and that He is almighty, omnipresent, holy, just, and good, but we shall find great victory if we but exercise knowledge of His constant presence. Exercise, I say, not only believe, but put into actual, realized consciousness the fact that God is truth, love, light and life. In Him is no darkness, no death. God lives in conscious reality where no sin abides. Let your heart, mind and whole being go out in loving loyalty to all the sweet will of God in holy oneness with your highest ideals. Breathe deep and long into the fullness of His love, and know the reality of eternal verities.

Do not stop or hesitate. Push out into the deeper depths of holy meditation. "Be still and know that I am God." Rest fully upon His mercy and goodness. Don't worry, just rest in the allness of God's love and power. Nothing can stand before His mighty presence. Sin and Satan must vanish like dew before the sun. The white light of God's holy presence will burn away all evil and

evil tempers, electrocute the old man of human sin, and flood the whole being with love divine.

DWELL DEEP

There are heights of holy rapture in the all consuming delights of the divine presence. But there are depths, deeper depths, in holy contentment alone with God. There is a place in the fullness of God's eternal love so deep that no storm can ever reach the holy calmness of the soul while resting in the eternal security of His grace and power. There is a deep resting place "in the hollow of his hand," where worry and fret are never known. We may be so "fixed," so "established," so "rooted and grounded" in the "*deep* things of God," that faith will become natural and life in God made easy.

Dwell deep, O my soul, in the love depths divine,
Far away from the world with its sin and its crime;
Still deeper, yes deeper in its fullness I'd be,
Wrapped in its joy-billows like a boundless sea;
Dwell deep, O my soul, dwell deep.

Dwelling deep, O my soul, in the fullness of grace,
Here alone I'd dwell in the light of thy face:
Sweetly kept from the world, from all care I am free,
Ever looking above where His glory I see;
Dwell deep, O my soul, dwell deep.

Dwelling deep, O my soul, in His presence divine,
Where peace like a river, and all power are mine;
Filled with His goodness, sweetly kept in His love,
Ever receiving more light and grace from above;
Dwell deep, O my soul, dwell deep.

STEPS IN SPIRITUAL CONSCIOUSNESS

How may we reach the desired end and attain unto this victorious realization of the divine presence? is most

vital indeed. While we may not hope to cover all the important steps in one brief statement, there are a few suggestions which will help, we trust, those who would search for higher altitudes in spiritual power. It may be well to begin at the very beginning, that there may be no misunderstanding as we shall try to proceed to mark the pathway of spiritual progress. Jacob, in his dream, saw a ladder reaching from heaven to earth with angels descending and ascending. To climb Jacob's ladder we must find its resting place and begin at the first round. We must remember that we are of the earth, earthy; and to bear the image of the heavenly we must find where to take the first step.

First, we must denounce our sin and folly in open confession. Cease our rebellion and turn with all our heart in full repentance amid regret and sorrow. The same Spirit who brought conviction for our wrong will quicken our nature by faith into new life through the power of the regenerating grace of Christ. To abide in this new life from above, we must walk in the light and abide in Christ. Trust and go on unto perfection. Learn how to obey and walk by faith in full confidence that God is true and faithful.

Second, having been born of the Spirit, with quickened desire for inward purity we must then throw ourselves without one reservation into all the perfect will of God as revealed and unrevealed, crying from the heart, "Thy will be done." Die to all sin, inward, or outward, and reckon ourselves dead indeed unto sin, crucified with Christ, even going without the gate taking His reproach. On the ground of full devotement of all unto Christ our Lord, step forth on the promise of His faithful word. De-

nounce all doubts or questions, refuse to listen to sense consciousness or wait for physical evidences, but believe, keep right on believing, don't draw back, push forth in your faith and expectation; receive right now the fullness of His Holy Spirit. Will to believe and know that God is faithful, then the promised purity, peace and power will radiate through your whole being, and spiritual light will accompany the witness of the Spirit that all is well. There may be varied manifestations, but do not seek manifestations or physical evidences. Never stop until the consciousness of the spiritual presence of God fills your being.

Third, we must learn to walk by faith. As you move on in this holy way, trials and temptations will present themselves. There will be lonely hours and depressing experiences. It will be necessary to walk by faith. We must learn to not consider feelings, or physical evidences. We must rest in the eternal fact of God's wisdom, love and power. As our will remains in His sweet will nothing can separate us from His presence. "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, *for thou art with me.*" Then rest in this great truth of the all-presence of a loving Father-God.

Fourth, having received the witness of the Spirit to our justification and also to our sanctification we must continue to exercise spiritual consciousness. Never doubt or fear. Know that Christ by His Spirit dwells within you; that God is light, where no darkness can enter. God is truth and in His presence no sin can abide. God is life, force and power, and no weakness can overpower His strength. "Practice makes perfect." If for a moment you seem to fail, "Try, try again." Have seasons of med-

itation, "Be still and know that I am God." Reject all mortal sense and cling to the all-ness of the eternal Spirit. No explanation will be needed, you will know the secret of His presence and walk in the light of His countenance in holy consciousness that God is all and in all.

"Jesus is all the world to me, my life, my joy, my all,
He is my strength from day to day, without Him I would fall;
When I am sad to Him I go; no other one can cheer me so,
When I am sad, He makes me glad; He's my friend.

"Jesus is all the world to me, I want no better friend;
I trust Him now, I'll trust Him when life's fleeting days shall end;
Beautiful life with such a friend, beautiful life that has no end,
Eternal life, eternal joy, He's my friend."

CHAPTER III

LIVING BEFORE THE LORD

"I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living" (Psalm 116:9).

Walking before the Lord is walking in conscious realization of the presence of God. Living before the Lord, is living in conscious realization of the divine presence. Coming into the presence of God, or appearing before God, is to consciously shut out everything from our thinking and enter into a closet of holy separation, in devoted communion with the infinite One. Here God will become nearer to us than our hands or our feet, closer than our very heart beats. Wrapped in the deepest consciousness of the divine Presence, we shall know something of what it is to be hid away in the secret of His presence from the strife of tongues. This is not the charm of an imaginative mystic, but the all-consuming realization of the eternal verities of divine presence radiating the heavenly light of God's beneficent countenance through the entire being.

The spiritual vision is so clear that the eyes of faith not only can see clear through, but the light of God's countenance radiates its white beams of divine presence through every part of our being. We then understand the true meaning of our Lord when He declared, "If thine eye be single thy whole body shall be full of light." In this secret place of the Lord we may truly "walk before the Lord in the land of the living."

"I have found the wondrous secret
Of abiding in the Lord,
I have learned the blessed sweetness
Of confiding in His Word."

Here we are never alone.

"When I awake I am ever with thee." We rest upon His Word. "Lo I am with you alway, even unto the end." "Darkness and light are the same unto thee." We can boldly say, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me."

POWER OF SPIRITUAL PRESENCE

In the controversy of God with His people at the foot of Mount Sinai, when Aaron had made that golden calf, and the people had thus shut out God from their worship, God declared He could go no farther with them. In earnest prayer Moses pleaded for God's presence to return and continue with them. God promised help, blessing and angels to go with them in their journey. This would have been quite sufficient for some, for there are many trying to get on with mere profession without even angels. Not so with Moses. This man of God cried, "If thy presence go not with us, carry us not up hence." What an appreciation of the divine presence! How Moses clung and held on with fingers of steel for the open heavens and a manifestation of God's presence to continue with them. What power was wrapped up in this presence! Sweetened waters to satisfy their thirst, manna from heaven to sustain them for their weary marches, wisdom for solving their perplexing problems, clothes to keep them warm, and light to guide their feet along the weary way.

No wonder that Moses insisted on the divine presence going with them. In the vision of this great leader God was more real than any earthly object, and the divine presence more highly prized than all besides. Rich favors and holy angels might help, but they could not take the place of God's presence in abiding communion.

BEFORE THE LORD

On God's part He is always present beholding the evil and the good, but on our part He is only present when we "set the Lord always before our face." Then we are never greatly moved. God is the same yesterday, today and forever; yet sin will becloud and cast a fog before the face of God which hides His presence from us.

What a joy, what a comfort, the first pair must have had in the beautiful garden, when God in the pleasure of His being so radiated His presence, pronouncing everything good, yea very good, and walked with man in blessed fellowship. The garden was beautiful in itself, but was made wonderful by the presence of God. What a change in the holy relationship when man disobeyed! He heard the "voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God" (Gen. 3:8). Because of his sin man was driven "out from the presence of the Lord," and the flaming sword of truth, bathed in heaven's purity, ever stood before him to guard the tree of life. Man's only way back to God and the glory of His presence, was and is, through the emblem of the blood; the token of the recognition of justice, and when the light of the flaming sword of truth shines through the blood, its purity transforms and sanctifies the nature and leads man into holy communion with God.

Cain, that wicked one who slew his brother, "went out from the presence of the Lord." That is, by his transgression and disobedience, the spiritual atmosphere was so changed as to shut him out from the presence of God. This law of spiritual presence was clearly revealed by God through Moses. "Whosoever . . . goeth unto the holy things . . . having his uncleanness upon him, that soul shall be cut off from my presence. I am the Lord" (Lev. 22:3). When the church of the Old Testament had so rebelled against God, and their sin had become so determined, God cast an entire nation "out from his presence," leaving only a remnant, the holy seed, to preserve truth in the earth. There is a spiritual law that sin separates one from the presence of God. Sin is a thick cloud which shuts God's radiating presence away from the soul. "Your sins have separated you from God." When one becomes wilful and disobedient, like Jonah of old, by his wilfulness, "he goes out from the presence of God."

COMING INTO GOD'S PRESENCE

As sin separates from the presence of God, so that He will not hear, there must be a way back into God's presence, where prayer may become effective. How may we reach this abiding place? Listen to the exhortation of Jeremiah, "Arise, cry out in the night: in the beginning of the watches pour out thine heart like water before the face of the Lord: lift up thy hands toward him." Notice first, "Arise," that is, stir thyself, get thoroughly aroused. Second, "Cry," get in earnest. Third, "Cry out," let your desire be known. Fourth, "In the night," continue, don't stop for difficulties. Fifth, "In the beginning of the watches," begin early and continue. Sixth, "Pour out your heart," devoted prayer, in sincerity, be honest,

frank. Seventh, "Before the face of God," recognize His presence here and now. Eighth, "Lift up thy hands," demonstrate your sincerity. Put your desire into action. Manifest your confidence in His faithfulness. If these principles are put into practice it will not take long for the spiritual atmosphere to clear away and for the sunshine of God's presence to fill the soul. We have other very important conditions to consider.

"Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place?" Now get the answer: "He that hath clean hands and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully." What may such a one expect? "He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation." How? Read Psalm 24:6; 27:8. Then read the fifteenth Psalm and find out who can abide and dwell in the holy place of God's presence. We shall find that the laws which govern in spiritual things have to do with upright walking, working and talking. "He walketh uprightly," "worketh righteousness," and "speaketh the truth in his heart." Here we have some fixed laws which must determine results. We must be in harmony with spiritual laws to receive spiritual results. "If any man will do his will he shall know." We have God's promise in 2 Chron. 7:14, "If my people . . . shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I . . . forgive their sins and will heal their land."

SPIRITUAL LAWS

It will not be difficult for us to understand how spiritual laws and their relation to spiritual things must necessarily control in obtaining spiritual results. In natural

science we have many changes by the combination of different elements, and so it is in the spiritual world. In the natural world how different are the two gases, yet, when combined, instantly form water. The chalky rock soon crumbles and has no place in permanent structures, but under pressure with water and heat it is transformed into rich marble to adorn our beautiful buildings. It is the combination of elements and conditions which changes its nature. Thus we shall find the secret of spiritual results as we better understand the relation of spiritual laws and fully obey divine direction in their application. Glycerine is indeed weak as an explosive, but when the right proportion is mixed with nitric acid it becomes a mighty dynamic force. Human nature, and even human faith, is exceedingly weak when alone, but when combined with spiritual laws it may undertake great things and remove mountains of difficulties.

As we advance in the study of prayer we shall see how that prayer is a spiritual law in combination of relationships. Gravitation is thought to be universal but it is not, for it does not reach into the laws of life and personal relationship. When we come to spiritual things we enter into another realm altogether. Prayer is a mighty force and a divinely established method in the spiritual regime. No one claims that natural laws are destroyed in answer to prayer. But God who established natural laws could overcome such laws if He chose to do so. And why not? Man does, and is doing so every year by combining other laws. Why should it be thought a thing incredible that God made the iron swim? Even mortal man has suspended thousands of tons of iron over rivers for a highway over which heavy loaded trains move in safety.

Personality no longer fears these natural laws but simply overcomes natural law by other laws. We should not wonder that God who made these laws can do even more, suspend them, overcome them by the greatness of His power by other and higher laws in the realm of spiritual verities.

DWELLING BEFORE GOD

"He that dwelleth in the secret place." "I have set the Lord alway before my face." "Praying alway with all prayer." "Pray without ceasing." With spiritual relationship, inward attitudes and conditions adjusted in harmony with the will and nature of God, the heavens will open and the presence of God will be clearly revealed. With this communion with God, it is easy to pray and get things in answer to our faith. What an opportunity! What privileges given to every one of us! Our Lord opened heaven and showed us how. "Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name, ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." When we read of what has been accomplished through prayer by those who have known the secret place of His presence, we are encouraged to ask more largely.

Abraham stands before the Lord. Lot is in danger in the wicked city of Sodom. The judgment fires are being kindled. Abraham, with a grip of iron, pulls on the ropes of God's mercy. By prayer after prayer he moves his hold closer to the heart of the Eternal until he reaches the very limit. Suddenly angels fly to the rescue, and poor Lot is saved as by fire.

Elijah stands before the Lord in perfect confidence and speaks with authority to the king without fear or trembling: "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before

whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word." Read the life of this great prophet of God and note the results which followed in his life as he lived so consciously in the presence of God. Fed by the ravens: sustained through the miraculous increase of the widow's meal; raising the dead to life; praying fire down from heaven to consume the sacrifice with the altar; calling fire from the skies as evidence of his prophethood; he then ascended in a fiery chariot of glory from earth to the world unseen to enjoy the fulness of the divine presence, the eternal glory of this wonderful God of Elijah.

PROTECTION

Hidden away in the presence of God from the strife of tongues, from the turbulent forces, we have protection from noisome pestilence and from the fowler's snare. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High, shall abide *under* the *shadow* of the Almighty."

Behold Daniel thrust into the den of lions. But in the calmness of that night this great hero slept in sweet repose sheltered in the presence of his God. No lion could move a jaw or with a cruel paw tear his flesh while he was filled with the conscious realization of God who was able to deliver him.

The three Hebrew children walked in holy calm in the heated furnace, while the form of a fourth, all radiant like the Son of God was with them. How precious that promise: "My presence shall go with thee and I will give thee rest." His presence gives a sigh of relief, followed by a great calm. Circumstances matter but little when we realize this glorious fact.

THE SECRET OF HIS PRESENCE

In the secret of His presence
I am kept from strife of tongues;
His pavilion is around me,
And within are ceaseless songs!
Stormy winds, His word fulfilling,
Beat without, but cannot harm,
For the Master's voice is stilling
Storm and tempest to a calm.

In the secret of His presence
All the darkness disappears;
For a sun that knows no setting,
Throws a rainbow on my tears.
So the day grows ever lighter,
Broadening to the perfect noon;
So the day grows ever brighter,
Heaven is coming, near and soon.

In the secret of His presence
Never more can foes alarm;
In the shadow of the Highest
I can meet them with a psalm,
For the strong pavilion hides me,
Turns their fiery darts aside,
And I know whate'er betides me,
I shall live because He died!

In the secret of His presence
Is a sweet, unbroken rest;
Pleasures, joys, in glorious fullness,
Making earth like Eden blest;
So my peace grows deep and deeper,
Widening as it nears the sea,
For my Savior is my Keeper,
Keeping mine, and keeping me!

—Henry Burton.

CHAPTER IV

WAITING IN HIS PRESENCE

"Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart; wait I say on the Lord" (Psalm 27:14).

In this age of hurry and rush, with our telephones, and fast moving trains, electric cars and steamboats, automobiles and flying machines, it seems all impossible for us to wait. We want everything done in a hurry, hot cakes and syrup swallowed with one gulp, and then run to catch the car. In our great cities looking down Broadway one can but think of the words of the prophet when he said, "Many shall run to and fro." Nearly every hour of the day we may see them running in all directions.

There is no time for prayer and we do not pray much. Hours of waiting before the Lord drag heavily and the actions which speak more distinctly than words are not much different from the record found in the words of the famous prophet: "What profit that we have kept his ordinances, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts." People seem to act as though prayer was a vain thing, and the prayer room is almost deserted and few enjoy the hours of waiting before the Lord. They say we get no answer and what is the use to pray?

There is time for pleasure, time for work, time to serve ourselves, time to visit, time to talk, time for sleep; no time for Jesus. But our Lord would call His people

away, apart into the desert to rest and wait awhile. Yet it is so hard sometimes to wait.

On the railroad crossings we notice this sign, "Stop, Look and Listen." That is what we are called to do in this text at the head of this chapter. How many accidents would have been avoided if people had only stopped, looked and listened for awhile. There are many danger crossings along life's pathway. Stop, look and listen. Wait on the Lord.

A man rushed into the depot to purchase his ticket. The clerk did not hurry, knowing there was plenty of time before the next train pulled away. The man soon became impatient, when the clerk replied, "The train has just left, the next train leaves in about one hour." The man became excited and declared he could not wait. He hurriedly paced the room and the platform. Suddenly the quick actions of the telegraph operator indicated something wrong. Soon the clerk made known the accident of the outgoing train and the many passengers killed or wounded. Then this impatient man took his seat and exclaimed, "Thank God," and waited gladly. Don't hurry. Linger, wait before the Lord. You will save time.

There are three thoughts to which I would call your attention; first, the soul's attitude in waiting; second, God's purpose in the soul's waiting, and third, some soul blessings in waiting.

THE SOUL'S ATTITUDE IN WAITING

Everything depends upon this. The right attitude of the soul is the connecting wire which brings the divine blessing. This is the point of connection with God. If this is lost, all is lost. I so well remember while in one of

our public libraries in a large city of Massachusetts, how I tried to get light as the night came on. How I tried by turning the switch, then at the light and then at the switch again. Finally the janitor came and with one turn at the light bulb, the light was on. That is it, if the Lord can only get hold of us and give us a turn or two we shall make the connection. We are apt to lose the connection through the disturbing elements of this old world and when the point of contact is lost the current is off and all the pounding in the world will not give the power. We need a twist or two to bring us back into the right attitude.

Now let us look at a few texts in the Word.

1. Psalm 104:27. After describing the fish of the sea and the beasts of the field and the birds of the air, the writer declares, "All these *wait* upon thee that they may receive their meat in season."

THE THOUGHT IS THAT OF DEPENDENCE

If God so careth for the sparrow and so clothes the grass of the field shall He not much more clothe you and care for you? Depend on Him. If there is one drop of self-dependence, one iota of self-reliance, one jot or tittle of self-confidence, it will darken the waters and blot the pages of our life's history; and we shall never reach the point of our rightful success in spiritual things. When every earthly stay is gone and we reach the point of absolute dependence upon God we shall then find the place where God will undertake for us, and it is here where we rest in the Lord and wait for Him.

2. Psalm 62:1. "Truly my soul *waiteth* upon God." Is *silent* unto God is the way the margin reads.

HERE THE SOUL REACHES THE ATTITUDE OF SILENCE

One great trouble with us all, we chatter too much and talk back too often to the Lord. It would be better to wait and let God talk. Do you remember how God's people of old were always asking this question, when in trial or some hard place, "Why hast thou brought us out into this wilderness to die of thirst, or perish with hunger, or to be killed by the Amalekites?" Oh that everlasting "why." I so well remember how the dear Lord took this "why" out of my soul. I was passing through one of the greatest trials that comes to a father's heart. The electric car was dashing along at about thirty miles an hour. I began to tell God what seemed to me to be facts about my work, my efforts to be true and faithful, my loyalty to the doctrine of holiness, my willingness to suffer reproach, and endure hardships for the truth. Then I asked why this trial had come into my life. The sweetest voice spoke to my heart: "My child, I hold your hand and you do not need to know *why*." With tears, I quickly replied, "Pardon me, dear Jesus, I will never ask why again," and I have not. God would like to have the why taken out. Did you know one cannot drawl out the *why* without the whine? Yes, that is it, "Be silent unto God."

We talk too much. Would it not be well to allow God a chance to talk to us? It is hardly polite to insist on doing all the talking. We do not like our visitors to do all the talking. Some would hardly allow the dear Lord to get a word in edgewise, they never visit with the Lord only when they do all the talking. Come into His presence and wait. "Be still." "Be silent unto God."

3. Psalm 62:5. "My soul, *wait* thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him."

THIS IS THE THOUGHT OF EXPECTANCY

Some of us have watched the little birds as they were being fed by the mother bird. There was the nest filled with the little bunches of bones, and with the smallest stir, open would fly their mouths which seemed to be the largest part of their body just waiting for something to fill it. This promise is made so plain, "Open thy mouth wide and I will fill it." Expect large things. So many are like the woman in her dream. In the dream she seemed to be in the antechamber of heaven. It all seemed like a great department store. Many counters, some loaded, others with nothing on them at all. It all seemed a mystery. Presently an angel came along to explain. She saw a table marked with her own name, loaded with many things she would like, and some things for which she had even prayed. She saw a table not far from hers marked, "Sister Brown." Then the angel explained, "This is the delivery room. People come here and take their answers. Your table is loaded with things ready for you, but you have never taken them. Not so with Sister Brown. When she asks, she comes at once to take her answers. Nothing lies around her table." She awoke from her dream, to not only ask but receive.

God is willing to give and fulfill His promise, but it is important that we know how to receive and take what He gives to us. Here is a double transaction. Should a father desire to give his son an education, even though he has ample provision he cannot unless the boy is willing to receive. The son can limit his father and tie his hands and prevent his father doing what he would. So in our receiving from God what He has promised, "When ye pray believe that ye receive and ye shall receive."

4. Psalm 40:1. "I *waited* patiently for the Lord and he inclined unto me." "In my *waiting,* I *waited* for the Lord," is what the margin has to say.

A PATIENT SOUL IN WAITING

Is not this a great trouble with us and the reason why we miss God's thought? We once had a horse which would stand all right but kept up an everlasting prancing in the dooryard, when on the road she was slow enough. She would wait but there was no waiting in her waiting. Isn't this the trouble with most of us? "Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for him, fret not thyself." "In quietness and confidence shall be your strength." The patient waiters shall be no losers.

5. Psalm 123:2. "Behold, as the eyes of the servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes *wait* upon the Lord our God, until that he have mercy upon us."

HERE WE HAVE THE ATTITUDE OF UNQUESTIONING OBEDIENCE

The servant and maiden always ready to go anywhere as the command may be given. "Thy will" must be the attitude of all if we are to get things from God. The willing and the obedient shall eat the good of the land. If we were more willing to catch His eye and get His thought our lives would be more blessed.

The little dog was having great sport with his ball. How he would throw it into the air, then it would bounce and he would jump for it and catch it in his mouth, then throw it again. Finally it rolled near the feet of his master. Then his master quickly put his foot upon it and held it firmly. The little dog tried to get it out and then

began to bite the shoe. After a little he began to bark and bark. The man paid no attention but was looking off in another direction with an unrelenting gaze. Presently the dog sat down and waited, and fixing his eye upon the face of his master with almost motionless silence he waited, while the features of the man were rigid and firm and his eyes fixed upon some distant object with unrelenting gaze. Then the man was making up his mind what he would do and all unconsciously his muscles relaxed just a little. The dog with his eyes firmly fixed began to wag his tail just a little, then faster and faster. In a moment he jumped for the ball and got it for he knew when the foot was off by the expression on the face.

If we can only get our eyes off from the object of our desire and get them well fixed on the face of our Master with the attitude of unquestioning obedience, patient, expectant, silent, dependent waiting, He will turn on the current of His blessing.

GOD'S PURPOSE IN THE SOUL'S WAITING

When God calls we may be sure of a divine plan and well fixed purpose. God never asks us to wait just to tease us like the man with the dog, there are great underlying principles which can only thus be worked out.

1. It gives opportunity for deep meditation. "On thy laws do I meditate." The blessed man meditates on his law day and night, then he becomes a tree planted by the rivers of water. "While I was musing the fire burned." The Wesleys in their search for the fullness of the blessing record that in the morning hours while they were waiting their "hearts were strangely warmed."

2. It gives opportunity for inward searching. This gives knowledge of inward defilement. "Search me, O

God, and know my heart, try me and know my thoughts." The housekeeper's reply when the mistress lifted the curtain and let the glorious sunlight in, and pointed out the dirt in the corner, was that "the dirt would never have been seen if it had not been for the nasty sun." It was not the nasty sun but the nasty dirt. Let the light in, my brother, and we may discover why God has not blessed us.

3. It will bring to our attention past failures, and help us to see our weakness and our only strength is in the Lord.

4. It will help us to see divine resources. "Open thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law."

5. Now do we not see why the disciples were to wait for their Pentecost? While there was the element of time with them yet there was doubtless a divine purpose in the command of Christ to "tarry until," and "wait for the promise of the Father." We do know that the time was filled with much prayer and supplication, and this could not be without meditation. We can well imagine the heart searching of the different disciples. And how afterwards Isaiah 64:4 must have been upon their lips, "Men have not heard nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him."

SOME SOUL BLESSINGS IN WAITING

We so often hear these familiar expressions which are all right in a way, "I want to serve Him better." But how shall we, unless we stay before Him long enough to know His will? "I will guide thee with mine eye." The servant who serves best is the one who best understands

the Master's thoughts and plans. Is this not one reason why we make such a bungle of our service? We run before sent and try to do before knowing His plans. A workman once stated, if he was given a limited time to do a particular job of work he would spend the first half of his time in preparation. Again we hear, "I want to know Him better." Paul said he gave all things for this most excellent thing the knowledge of Jesus Christ. How do we know each other? Only as we live with one another. "Be still and know that I am God," is the way of divine directions. Make Him your constant companion. "I want to love Him better," is another expression. How do we increase in love to others? By confidential communion. Telling secrets and whispering heart throbs. "Commune with thine own heart." This will be the satisfying portion of life and our joy forever, when we learn the precious art of holy communion.

There are two soul blessings which will surely come to us if we wait long enough.

1. We shall get our answer. God always answers yes or no, and either answer is sweet to the ear of love for He knows best. We shall *surely hear from heaven* if we wait long enough. You will remember Hannah and how she poured out her soul, in the temple that day. She made up her mind that one great question must be settled. How she swept in her faith beyond the priest, the temple, even the earth and moon and stars and reached the very throne of God. And when she came away it was said that her countenance was no more sad. She had gotten the victory and by faith took her desire away with her.

2. If we wait long enough we shall surely get visions of His presence. There are spiritual revelations of the

Lord which are given to the seeking soul who would know Him. Yonder we may see the tomb and note the gloomy hours of waiting which intervened between the cross and resurrection dawn. At last the morning dawns, after the sleepless night of waiting. Coming to the grave sad thoughts must have filled their hearts. They see the stone rolled away. The hurried coming of two disciples gives interest. What a vision of angels. No wonder that some went away to tell the news. But Mary lingered. The rolled stone was wonderful. The opened tomb was grand. The angels were all glorious but all this was not enough for Mary. What was on her heart? In the dusky dawn of morning light a form was seen, but the burning question of Mary's heart was, "If you have taken away my Lord, tell me where he is and I will take him away." What was on her heart? "My Lord." Then standing there in silence for a moment while she was filled with astonishment. Quickly came from His lips, "Mary." That deep sweet-toned voice could never be mistaken and falling to her knees she exclaimed, "My Lord and my God." "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."

If we will but wait, linger a moment, commune with our heart; then "be still," "wait," we shall get the answer and receive revelations of His presence.

"Sitting at the feet of Jesus,
O what words I hear Him say!
Happy place, so near, so precious!
May it find me there each day.

"Sitting at the feet of Jesus
There I love to weep and pray,
While I from His fulness gather
Grace and comfort every day."

INSPIRATION IN HIS PRESENCE

"The Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee" (Numbers 6:25).

There is great inspiration while waiting in the presence of God. "The Lord is my light and my life." A beautiful, holy calm possesses one who realizes the constant presence of God. There is a depth of satisfaction reached in this holy atmosphere beyond all expression. I shall never forget my visit with Sister Fanny J. Crosby, that great hymn writer of national fame in the religious world of song. She was in Springfield, Mass., on a visit with one of her old friends and speaking in his mission. She had refused to visit with anyone only at the mission. With no thought of anything more than to look into her face whose songs had meant so much to me, I attended the mission one night. Her friend, the leader, asked me to pray. At the close of the prayer Sister Crosby whispered, "You may ask this preacher to visit me at your home." I was overjoyed when the brother informed me of her willingness for a brief visit the following day at one o'clock.

Sister Fanny Crosby was blind from early childhood and possessed a frail body, but one of the happiest spirits I ever met. I sat for one hour spellbound as she related her experience, in the midst of which she bounded from her chair in holy joy. I think she would have fallen had not the dear sister of the home taken her in her arms. I should have gone at the close of the first hour, but she

urged me to remain longer. She told me the history of many of her songs. But the one thing which impressed me most of all was she seemed so conscious of the presence of God. Heavenly things were so real, and the divine presence so constant, her communion with her Lord so unbroken, her face was fairly radiant with joy and gladness. My own face much of the time was bathed in tears of appreciation, while heaven seemed open and Christ smiled upon us with beams of light and truth. She told me of the inspiration of that wonderful song,

"A wonderful Savior is Jesus my Lord,
A wonderful Savior to me,
He hideth my soul in the cleft of the rock,
Where rivers of pleasure I see."

She told me how this song was given to her by special inspiration. Brother Kirkpatrick, the noted song writer, came to her home in quest of some poetry to fit some music which he had composed. There was nothing in her already composed poems that would fit this strain of music. She retired at once to her room, for meditation and prayer, and in twenty minutes came forth with the four verses and chorus composed and committed to memory. Brother Kirkpatrick quickly wrote the poem down and placed it to his music, as it is in our song books and has been sung by multiplied thousands. This song has always been a precious song to me, but since that day its preciousness has increased a thousandfold.

As I listened to her thrilling experience it seemed far better not to have eyes and be able to see clearly the unseen and thus behold the beauty of our Lord; than having eyes, see nothing but material things. How we need

inspiration for knowledge, strength, love, safety, faith and service.

SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE

Paul, that great apostle, who at the feet of that great teacher Gamaliel had dug deeply into the resources of science, philosophy and history, appreciated spiritual knowledge. Gladly he counted all things but loss for this most excellent knowledge. "That I might know him and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings." But how may I know Him? Take time in His presence to get acquainted. "Be still and know that I am God." Time alone with God will accomplish more than reason. Man by reason cannot find out God. This knowledge comes by revelation. All we know of the material world is revealed through the material senses. Spiritual knowledge is obtained through spiritual revelation. "We shall know if we follow on to know." "In thy light shall we see light." We may know God in the revelation of His character through history and providence, but to know God through Christ is the perfect method. "If ye know me ye shall know my Father also." "My sheep know my voice and they follow me." "Hereby we know that we know him when we keep his commandments, and his commandments are not grievous." We may obtain much information through nature and revelation, but to truly know God there must be inward illumination through the power and presence of the Holy Spirit. "He hath given us of his Spirit that we may truly know the things that are freely given to us of God." To really know my relationship with Christ is indeed the highest knowledge, this inward knowledge is given to us by the witness of the Spirit through our justification and our

inward cleansing. This knowledge is obtained in His presence.

STRENGTH FOR THE WEAK

"They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength." We have all thought of the almightiness of God and have believed that He could do anything, He has all power in heaven and earth. He sitteth upon the circles of the earth and the inhabitants are as only grasshoppers. He has weighed the mountains in scales and knows just how many tons of rock and sand there are in the Rocky Mountains; He has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand and knows just how many gallons of water are in the great Pacific Ocean. He has meted out the heavens and counted all the stars and can tell just how many there are in the milky way, and can call them all by their right names and give their age, by the greatness of His power not one has failed in a thousand years.

Then we have thought of the weakness of man and how he has failed at every turn he has made. How his empires have crumbled to the dust and his works of art have passed away, and his knowledge has grown musty with age. His plans and purposes come to nothing and his visions fade away like the dew before the sun. We have seen strong young men, with a future, miss the mark and go down in disgrace and utterly fail.

Then we have wondered if there could not be some connection between the strength of the Almighty and the weakness of man. This promise has a peculiar charm about it, and we have so often quoted it with joy, for it breathes holy inspiration through every line and charms us with its hope of victory. Notice the promise of this text. "He shall strengthen thine heart," and all this by

waiting in His presence. Should you want another promise meditate on this: "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."

WAITING BEFORE THE LORD

Wait quietly before Him, hush, be still.
Christ is ever true, He thy soul will fill.
Do not hurry, linger longer,
Soon thy soul will be stronger;
Wait, stay before Him, linger there at length;
From His presence you'll find sufficient strength.

Wait, wait before Him, linger at His feet,
He will speak, softly whisper words so sweet:
Be thou silent, do not worry,
Linger longer, do not hurry:
There in expectation true, calmly wait;
He will quickly, surely, open heaven's gate.

Wait, wait before Him, He is all in all:
In His loving arms you will never fall.
Then calmly wait His own sweet will,
Every promise He will fulfill;
Weakness now shall turn to strength by His grace,
While rich glory shines from His blessed face.

CHAPTER V

SECRET OF HOLY COMMUNION

"Teach us to pray" (Luke 11:1).

Our Lord gave us the secret of life by His own example. His Father was ever with Him. "I do always those things which please him." "The Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." To our Lord, His heavenly Father was more real than an earthly association. "I in my Father and my Father in me."

May we mention again that text in Isaiah which unfolds such great meaning in the life of our Lord: "He shall be of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord," or as one has rendered it, "He shall draw his breath in the fear of the Lord." In other words, God was so near and real that in every breath He drew, there was a conscious realization of His Father's presence. Not a second between. Our Lord has revealed His plan for us as well: "Abide in me, my words abide in you." Here we have a constant realization of divine presence, and a sense of the reality of Christ. The cry must ever be only,

ONLY THEE, MY LORD

"Show me Thy face—
One transient gleam
Of loveliness divine
And I shall never think or dream
Of other love save Thine.

All lesser light will darken quite,
All lower glories wane;
The beautiful of earth will scarce
Seem beautiful again.

"Show me Thy face—
And I shall be
In heart and mind renewed,
With wisdom, grace and energy
To work Thy work endued,
Shine clear, though pale,
Behind the veil,
Until the veil removed,
In perfect glory I behold
The face that I have loved."

—James Mudge.

Our Lord in His earthly ministry was our great example in prayer. He prayed all night alone on the cold mountain side. He taught that men ought always to pray. We should never faint or become weary in prayer. We should not merely say prayers, but ask, seek, and knock. He urged that we should continue in prayer, importune, become desperate in our praying like the man asking for three loaves of bread, or the widow troubling an unjust judge.

WHAT IS PRAYER?

There is no "how" in prayer. No set forms or mere "powerful praying" as it is sometimes termed. Real prayer is not always filled with rhetorical beauty or human eloquence. After a certain religious service in Boston, one of the dailies commenting on the prayer offered by one of the noted preachers of that city, stated in the report: "This was one of the most eloquent prayers ever offered to a Boston audience." We trust, of course,

that this great preacher had other things in mind, but if not then he surely had his reward.

Prayer is more than saying words, or turning the prayer wheel of forms, or counting beads, or uttering platitudes of some doctrine. "When thou prayest, enter into thy closet" (alone in the presence of God), "pray to thy Father which is in secret." In other words, shut out material sensibilities, get alone with God in the secret place of His presence; abide, dwell, don't hurry away, "for he that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty."

"Alone with God, the world forbidden;
Alone with God, O blest retreat!
Alone with God and in Him hidden,
To hold with Him communion sweet.
'Tis there I find new strength for duty
As o'er the sands of time I plod,
I see the King in all His beauty
While resting there alone with God."

MODERN SCIENCE

False Science seems to find no place for real prayer. They would tell us that God is too great to give attention to such small matters as human needs. That His great eternal laws cannot be changed, it is therefore unthinkable that God should give attention to our prayers. These men would try to make us feel that to pray expecting an answer is superstitious. They would inform us that in the near future all will clearly see the folly of prayer. All "worship as the expression of dependence upon and adoration of the Deity will have disappeared." "Our grandchildren will stand in reverent wonder before nature's mighty forces." Thus "nature's mighty processes" will become the god of the future. This is too much like the

worship of the ancient heathen, who worshiped sun, moon and stars, and other forces of nature like fire, water and air.

As I stand in holy wonder and awe in the presence of our Father-God, who created all things and established the laws of nature, I am compelled to feel that there must also be great eternal laws which govern in the spiritual world, although unseen. When I came to know that many of the material forces which govern in the world of matter, when carried to a finer analysis like the atom and the electron, become all unseen to the natural vision, I was more profoundly convinced that what we see about us is evidence of the real existence of the supernatural or spiritual world, though unseen. Then I remembered these words of the great apostle to the heathen world of worshipers of force and nature, "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead." I am again impressed that nature's laws are only illustrations to enable us to understand the secret things of the spiritual and the invisible.

Our Lord laid down some laws, and established some principles by which we may know the reality of eternal verities, "If any man *will* do *his* will he shall know." To know the reality of spiritual things we must comply with the laws which control in the combination and relations of cause and effect. If we would know the mysteries in electrical energy we must comply with the laws which govern in the realm of electricity. If we would enjoy the benefits of radio we must "tune in," comply with the laws which govern in the realm of the radio world.

PRAYER DEFINED

There may be mysteries in the realm of prayer. There are hidden secrets and secret places. But Christ has bidden us ask and receive, seek and find, knock and have the heavens opened unto us. Someone has said, "Prayer is the heart's sincere desire, unuttered or unexpressed." Someone has said that "prayer is our heart throbs in desire."

If we will turn to the first chapter of First Samuel we may find a definition of real prayer, that is, the prayer which has an answer. Hannah had often prayed that her disgrace might be taken away in the gift of a man child. She had made promises and asked many times, but here we have the record of her prayer in the tabernacle. She was a woman of tears and of sorrowful spirit, heart burdened and moved with heart throbs—she really prayed. Of this prayer it is said that she "poured out her soul." It is said of our Lord's praying in Gethsemane that "being in agony he prayed the more earnestly." In giving us the real meaning the records declare that "He poured out his soul unto death." Real praying then must be "pouring out the soul before God." We may find a brief hint of this same definition in Elijah's prayer which opened the heavens for rain. It is said, "He prayed earnestly." Or as someone has rendered this expression, "He prayed in his prayer," or in our thought he poured out his desire. Our praying is too formal, dry, hard and crusty. It must be more liquid, tender, sincere, filled with heart-throbbing desires in faith believing. In other words, real prayer must burn with an all *controlling desire.* Alone with God, in the secret of His presence, in the realization of His presence, pour out your heart throbs, melted de-

sires, before the Lord. That is praying, real praying that gets an answer. In real praying there is always the realization of divine presence.

"God comes down our souls to greet,
While glory crowns the mercy seat."

PRAYER A CONDITION

Not only is prayer melted desire, but it is a condition of the heart, an attitude of the whole being. Prayer must comprehend communion with God. This is sympathetic intercourse, fellowship. Communion may also be defined as harmony. Harmony of will, and union of spiritual natures. In prayer we do not bend God's will, or turn His purpose. But in true prayer the heart is lifted in co-operation with God, which gives Him opportunity to work and carry forward His purposes as He could not otherwise do without our co-operation in faith. Prayer then may be defined as *the heart's controlling desire in holy communion with God.* Study our Lord's teaching as expressed in the prayer given in Luke 11:1-6, which was given in reply to the request of the disciples, "Lord, teach us to pray."

Here we have:

1. Faith in a personal God. We must approach God in prayer as the eternal One, "Who art in heaven." The great "I Am." Ever present, but personal Being. "He that cometh to God must believe that he is." Prayer must grasp the personality of God as the infinite One.

2. Prayer must express confidence in the Fatherhood of God. "Our Father." This must comprehend God as our Father, interested, tender, loving relationship. How easy to trust One so closely related to us. One who knows

and cares. "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things."

3. Here is also reverential respect and realized obligation for His holiness. "Holy is thy name," or "Hallowed be thy name." Not only must we ascribe holiness to God as our Father, but here is expressed the idea that we so desire His name to be preserved in holiness. This reflects back to the character of the worshiper who admires, loves and desires holiness.

4. Prayer should accept the obligation of His holiness upon ourselves. "Holy be thy name." To earnestly pray that God's name may be kept holy must arouse earnest effort on our part to live holy and free from known sin.

5. There must be recognition of divine authority. "Thy kingdom come." Our heavenly Father must be known as One with full authority. All our interests are placed in His hands. The kingdom of our lives is a place where He reigns. The government of all our interests is upon His shoulders. We recognize God as our Ruler.

6. Here is expressed a passion for the will of God, "Thy will be done." We must get to a place beyond *submitting* to the will of God, and pray for it, longing for its accomplishment. This was the very place of victory in the prayer of our Lord in the garden. "Not my will but thine be done." No other attitude of the heart is truly safe in the realm of prayer. The will of God must be sweet at any price for He knows what is best.

7. But God's will must be supreme for us here and now. "On earth as it is in heaven." Many would not object to God's will being done in heaven, but they would reverse the right to make their own plans while on earth.

This reservation will not give adjustments of an attitude to advance in holy communion. There must be immediate abandonment of the will to all the sweet will of God and a supreme desire that His will be worked out in our earthly lives.

8. In prayer as taught by our Lord there must be full dependence upon divine provision. "Give us this day our daily bread." We seemingly earn our own bread but we could not if it were not for God's over ruling care. A deep sense of our utter dependence upon God is essential. How careless and thoughtless to sit down to eat without proper thanksgiving.

9. The heart must be moved in love and kindness toward all with sincere forgiveness even though they may do us wrong. "Forgive as we forgive." The measure of our forgiveness for others is the measure of our blessing to be received in our asking.

10. Consider this deep fear of sin and evil. "Deliver us from evil." There must be such a fear of sin as to be perfectly willing to shun all appearance of evil of every kind. Many try to live just as near sin as possible and yet retain some hope of heaven. Like the boy who fell out of bed and gave this excuse, "I slept too near the place where I got in." We had better pray, "Keep back thy servant from presumptuous sins."

11. Then follows a realization of our weakness, "Lead us not into temptation." We cannot plan our own path in life. It is not in man to direct his own steps. We shall find our way more happy if we will allow the Lord's leadership.

12. Last, but not least, deep humility, "Thine is the kingdom and the power, and the glory forever." There

are three things which God has reserved to Himself. "*Vengeance* is mine, I will repay saith the Lord." "No flesh should *glory* in his presence." "*Judge* not that ye be not judged."

If we study this outline just a little we shall find that prayer carries with it attitudes and conditions. When the conditions are met prayer is complete. Thus prayer is the scientific combination of relationships, attitudes and conditions which will unlock heaven and adjust our asking and receiving.

To open a safe we need to know the combination—how many turns each way and at what numbers to stop. So we need to know the combination which will open without fail, the secrets of the Lord. Real prayer is not only asking, but it is a combination of attitudes. God is all fullness and all our needs are supplied through Christ Jesus. It is left with us to enter into God's treasures of the deep things of the Spirit. The Spirit has already revealed, through the Word, the boundless resources of grace, and bidden us to ask—"to come boldly to the throne of grace that we may obtain help in every time of need."

The combination of the lock to open heaven has also been given. We may have the answers to our prayers. God is not a God of circumstances, but a God of conditions. Sin separates from God, but the penitent cry from a broken heart and a contrite spirit opens the heavens in floods of forgiving peace. Carnal sin produces a thick cloud, which dims the vision, but full devotement in a trustful, loyal heart will clear the horizon and bathe the soul in the white light of purity. God is now real and prayer in holy communion is made easy.

The attitude of the soul is reflected in the sweet song of the poet,

Jesus, see me at Thy feet,
With my sacrifice complete;
I am bringing all to Thee,
Thine alone I'll be.

Then in full devotion the heart cries out in perfect submission:

Have Thy way, Lord, have Thy way,
This with all my heart I say,
I'll obey Thee, come what may,
Dear Lord, have Thy way.

Then in glad acclaim:

Praise the Lord, the work is done,
Praise the Lord, the victory's won,
Now the blood is cleansing me,
From all sin I'm free.

COMMUNION IN PRAYER

There may be and in reality there are many different attitudes manifested in the exercise of prayer. It will not be needful to give scripture quotation, but we may mention only words which reveal attitudes of the heart such as petition, adoration, confession, thanksgiving, consecration, praise. There is another word which gives not only attitude but in reality relationship, namely, communion. The meaning of this last word in reality runs all through the other attitudes. Even confession is the heart's cry for communion which has been broken by sin. So in reality communion must fill a very large place in prayer. The real cry of the soul is for God, a living God who is made real. Communion is the very heart of prayer. Thanksgiving and praise may be termed the voice; consecration the ear, adoration the face; petition the voice, but

as the heartbeats are felt in all the senses so communion with God throws impulse through all the other attitudes, and gives them all vitality and force.

When once the soul has touched the realities of eternal verities nothing can ever satisfy the inward longing but God himself. Nothing could satisfy the heart of Moses but God himself. "If thou goest not up with us, carry us not up hence."

Many years ago a book came to my hand, entitled, "Imitation of Christ," written by Thomas a Kempis who lived in the fourteenth century. He must have been a very holy man. While there seems to be a vein of penitence and a tendency to build character through effort, yet suffer one quotation which seems to breathe a deep passion in prayer for God himself which is the real force in communion.

> "Grant me, O most loving Lord, to rest in Thee above all creatures, above all health and beauty, above all glory and honor, above all power and dignity, above all knowledge and subtility, above all riches and art, above all fame and praise, above all sweetness and comfort, above all hope and promise, above all gifts and favors that Thou canst give and impart to us, above all jubilee that the mind of man can receive and feel; finally above angels and archangels, and above all the heavenly host, above all things visible and invisible, and above all that Thou art not, O my God. It is too small and unsatisfying, whatsoever Thou bestowest on me apart from Thee, or revealest to me, or

promisest, whilst Thou art not seen, and not fully obtained. For surely my heart cannot truly rest, nor be entirely contented, unless it rest in Thee. Amen."

THOMAS A KEMPIS (1379-1471).

"Nearer, still nearer, close to Thy heart,
Draw me, my Savior, so precious Thou art;
Fold me, O fold me close to Thy breast,
Shelter me safe in that haven of rest.

"Nearer, still nearer, Lord, to be Thine,
Sin, with its follies, I gladly resign;
All of its pleasures, pomp, and its pride,
Give me but Jesus, my Lord crucified."

CHAPTER VI

CLOUDS THAT INTERVENE

"Thou hast covered thyself with a cloud that our prayer should not pass through" (Lam. 3:44).

We begin to see that prayer, real prayer (not merely saying words, but prayer that brings to pass), that changes things, is wrapped up and filled with right conditions. Answers to real praying is as scientific and natural as any other fixed law in the universe. It is as impossible for some prayers to be answered as it would be to kindle a fire in wet, soggy wood. To have fire we must have right conditions. Even life is maintained by harmony between inward conditions and outward relations.

There are few people who pray at all; and there are few of those who pray, or say prayers, who give any attention to heart conditions. So many blindly fumble around, hit or miss: stumble on in the efforts, but slowly if ever, get much through prayer. A little more time in thoughtful study of conditions, and a better adjustment of our heart relations in spiritual matters, would bring better results.

Could we view the world as God must behold it all, it would not be merely beautiful scenery and entrancing vision of towering mountains white capped and crystal caverned in their snowy whiteness; rolling hills carpeted with fields of green, bedecked with blooming flowers; and graced by sparkling streams running over their pebbled

path to the ocean. God is looking for more beautiful scenery in transformed faces filled with faith.

We may picture the two sacrifices in early history. Here Cain, the firstborn, a type of worldliness, builds his altar, possibly of hewn stone and gracefully laid, "decently and in order." Then he piles upon it an abundance gathered from the toil of his own genius in the fruit of the ground. This kind of an offering might be appropriate under different conditions; or if Cain had been doing well, but now sin was lying at his door.

But he refused to admit of his wrong, either by a blood sacrifice or even to confess when openly reproved of God. Good works and self-justification were Cain's stock in trade, but the incense of such worship is often confusion and smoke about ourselves and shuts out the vision of God. And so it was with Cain, and ever will be with worldly worship. Abel was building his altar not far away. With downcast eyes and a troubled heart, he gathered the stones, remembering his sins, knowing if justice had her claims he would be the victim. From the example set in the slain beast when his father and mother were forgiven their great wrong; he now thinks of an innocent lamb which he takes and lays on the stones. Before the altar he kneels and worships with upturned face, while God sweetly smiles as the incense ascends heavenward. Two sacrifices: from one the smoke of the incense ascends; but from the other it descends. God has told us why: "Thou hast covered thyself with a cloud that our prayers should not pass through."

There are conditions and attitudes in the laws governing in the spiritual world which create misty clouds and darkness, so that prayer cannot pass through. The

carnal mind, under certain conditions, fills the spiritual atmosphere with such earthly humidity and clouds of doubt and fear so cover the heaven above us that our prayers are driven back to us and descend like smoke on a foggy day. When conditions are right, real prayer ascends in the presence of God in secret incense like arrows pointed heavenward. A clear sky, an open heaven, a conscious realization of divine presence, is all important if we are to enjoy the blessed fact of answered prayer. Let us consider a few well-known conditions which intervene and shut God out like clouds so that prayers are hindered.

INSINCERITY

The Lord has made known that He cannot hear the prayer of insincerity. The hope of that righteous man, Job, was that his heart was still loyal to God in the midst of his sorrow and trouble. When accused of hypocrisy, Job cried out, "What is the hope of the hypocrite? Will God hear his cry when trouble cometh upon him? Will he delight himself in the Almighty? Will he always call upon God?" The implication is that He will not. If he is insincere he will doubtless seek for help from other sources rather than from God.

A sincere heart calls for help from God, when needs are born of necessity. We cannot make a plaything of prayer, praying for things just to see if prayer will be answered. Such praying never accomplishes anything. God could not and will not pay any attention to such insincerity. Christ refused to jump down from the pinnacle of the temple simply to try out His Father's promise at the request of Satan. It is true that there was a promise given to bear Him up "lest he dash his foot against a

stone," and this He well knew would be fulfilled when born of necessity. This promise was literally fulfilled a few weeks after this, when His life was in danger from the angry mob at the close of His first service in Nazareth. This angry mob would have pushed Him over the precipice and cast Him down, but He escaped out of their hands. Our Lord knew there were conditions in this promise. First, one must be kept in all His ways. Second, this promise was based on real needs, in the hour of danger: "lest thou dash thy foot against a stone." To presume on the mercy of God, or upon His love, pity and power, is evidence of insincerity. Sincerity cries for help only in case of real need, and when other sources will not avail.

There can be no deceit or camouflage in prayer. There must be no experiments to see if God will answer. Efforts of rhetorical beauty and eloquence are all lost in the air, and never get prayers through to the throne. Such praying to be seen and heard of men, verily has its reward from below, and not from above. Insincerity will cloud the face of God and hinder effectual prayer.

SIN

"But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear" (Isa. 59:2). Known sin drives us out "from the presence of the Lord." The prayer that God has promised to hear is the cry of the sinner, coming from a broken and contrite heart, which is a truly penitent prayer. God has pledged to hear and answer all such prayers. "Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord; and he will have mercy upon him and to our God,

for he will abundantly pardon." One sin will throw a cloud over the face of God, or more properly over our own heads so that our prayers cannot pass through.

EXCUSING WRONG

"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me" (Psa. 66:18). It is true that "love covereth a multitude of sins," but this must be in others and not in ourselves. We must watch carefully that natural tendency which would conceal sin in ourselves and expose it in others. God cannot look with any degree of allowance upon sin. Anything that looks like sin is hateful and abominable in His sight. We must take sides with God, which will make all sin hateful to us. How much easier it is to see sin, wrongdoing or mistakes in others than to admit such things in ourselves. It is very natural to see the faults in our neighbor's children and to regard our own as more angelic. How easy to condone, excuse, overlook wrongs when they are connected with the interest of the heart. Our dislike for sin or anything which looks like sin should be so intense as to flee from it and avoid all appearance of evil. To regard it by making any excuse, or to condone it with any regard will prove fatal in the ministry of prayer.

Notice, however, that this regard of iniquity is not merely intellectual, it is in the heart. Not openly, but secretly, hidden, covered up, only in the heart. With our lips we condemn it, but secretly and in the heart we excuse it. Even this heart regard for sin would produce a mist, which will develop into clouds, so that our prayers cannot pass through.

THE UNFORGIVING HEART

"When ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any; that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses, but if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses" (Mark 11:25). Remember also that this forgiveness must come from the heart. In the illustration which our Lord gave of the wicked servant who, having been forgiven a great debt, afterwards fell upon his fellow-servant, crying, "Pay me what thou owest," was likewise judged of his lord who had forgiven him much. This unforgiving fellow was judged and delivered to the tormenters until he could pay all that was due. "So likewise shall my Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not everyone his brother their trespasses." It is doubtless much easier to say, "I forgive" than to feel forgiveness deep in the heart. When we like to talk about the sins and misdeeds of others who have wronged us, is it not evidence that there is something still lurking in the heart that does not forgive? Someone may say, "How can I forgive when they have never asked forgiveness?" Very well, but the heart must be filled with that tender forgiving spirit, or there can be no real forgiveness when they do ask to be forgiven. It is our privilege to have stored up sufficient forgiveness for every wrong which may be done to us in all time. Yes, my friend, that old grudge must go, those old hateful feelings in the heart must die, or prayer cannot pass through to the throne. There may be much earnestness and fervor, with seemingly great liberty in public prayer, yet nothing comes of it but self-pleasure and the satisfaction that we have

made a great prayer. The clouds hang low over an unforgiving spirit.

BROKEN FELLOWSHIP

"Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift" (Matt. 5:23, 24). What revelations of heart conditions at the altar! How the memory works with lightning speed! Many things forgotten now appear before the mind. Unkind deeds, harsh words and broken fellowship come up before us like clear pictures. They have been buried and forgotten long ago, but now in trying to reach the throne they appear again just over our heads. All in vain the mind tries to excuse and explain them away. They still hover closely over our heads and the heart refuses to accept the excuse. Reason again tries to explain, "I never have done anything wrong. It is he that wronged me." But it is all in vain, for memory with unkind feeling and broken fellowship still lingers, and clouds hang low. The heart cannot believe. That prayer falls back, for there is no pathway through to the throne. There is only one course to pursue, follow the divine directions: Leave the gift before the altar ready to be offered. Don't take the gift, or yourself, along with you. Just keep yourself and everything upon the altar; and then go and be reconciled to your brother. He may refuse to be reconciled, but you can be reconciled just the same. He may say unkind things, but this will not hurt you, for you are still on the altar. It will not be hard for you then to return and offer your gift, for you are reconciled and ready to be offered. The wound and sting of the broken

fellowship is gone, your heart is free and the atmosphere above is clear, filled with the smile of God.

LACK OF ATTENTION

"He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination" (Prov. 28:9). "God desires truth in the inward part." To slight God's Word, or to turn away from walking in revealed truth, has the same effect as sin, which drives one away from the presence of God. This reckless attitude creates clouds in our spiritual skies. "The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him in truth." For one to despise God's Word is to break the law of spiritual communion. When new light is thrown upon our pathway we must never refuse to walk in it or neglect to immediately obey. If we do, strange clouds will begin to gather, and darkness will close in upon us. The will of God will become clouded; doubts and fears will arise which will hinder faith. "If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" We must never contend with God's Word, but walk in its clear light.

God has placed His Word above His name. The manner in which we speak of God's Word indicates the reverence and respect which we have for God himself. God's Word is forever settled in heaven, and it should be forever settled in our own hearts that His Word is supreme, therefore we must never turn our ears away from hearing the truth. To reject or neglect the ministry of the Word is more serious than many think. "O how love I thy law!" "Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb." "How sweet are thy words unto my taste!" God's Word being the foundation of our faith, it cannot be despised or rejected if we are to pray effectually.

SELFISHNESS

"Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts" (James 4:3). If our prayers could be really filtered, it would often be found that they are filled with much selfishness. If there could be some chemical process by which all the selfishness could be extracted I fear there would not be much left. So much of our praying is centered around ourselves, the interests of our families, or the people of our choice that we rarely if ever pray for those whose faces we have not seen in the flesh. It might be well for us to put our hearts on the witness stand and ask a few questions. Why do I pray? Why do I desire these things? What is my motive? Why am I not burdened for the children of others? Why am I so concerned for my own church, town, city or nation? Why do I never pray for those whose faces I have not seen as yet? Why do I pray for others? Is it because I realize their eternal danger? A sister asked the evangelist to pray for her husband, and then remarked, "He is so unkind to me." Why did she want her husband saved? Was it only because of his unkindness? Self-interest! How it casts its shadow to shut us away from God and to hinder our praying through.

DOUBTS

"But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord" (James 1:6, 7).

Doubts are thick clouds in our spiritual atmosphere, which shut out spiritual things. When Peter saw Christ walking upon the rolling billows Christ was so real to him, and his dash of faith so mighty, that he could walk upon

the rolling waves himself in safety. When he became conscious of the winds and the waves doubt overpowered his faith, and then he lost his footing. Only one trouble, so his Lord asked, "Wherefore didst thou doubt?" "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth."

SELF-EXALTATION

"Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them." "When ye pray, use not vain repetitions," that is, to be seen and heard of men (Matt. 6:1-7). It takes only a little of self-glory and sense of our own importance to befog the heavens above us. This sense of self-importance is much like the modern term "smog," for city smoke and dense fog. It is too human and dense for spiritual desires to pass through.

IN THE HOME

"Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, . . . as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered" (1 Peter 3:7). Turn to this chapter and begin with the first verse, and read through to the seventh. This exhortation is centered around the home. If women would be more careful to dress in modest apparel. with purity and sobriety, their chaste conversation coupled with fear, they would more readily win their husbands to the church of Christ. In turn, if a husband will give honor to his wife, and protect and control the home with loving care, he may expect to receive higher honors from a devoted wife. The secret things of the home: disputes, contentions, sharp and hasty words, unkind looks and expressions—these often hinder in the prayer life. And there need not be a thunderstorm in the home, with flashing anger and noisy

words; the little nagging, faultfinding criticisms and thoughtless expressions, create cloudy days and shut away the sunshine of God's smile. When the pastor asked Aunt Susan to lead in prayer, she mumbled out a few broken thoughts in a low tone while the husband, with bowed head, gently groaned. No wonder, if you could have heard that scolding and faultfinding over a new dress and a stylish hat, and those hot words because he was late for breakfast. Later the husband was asked to pray. How he stumbled and hesitated and got nowhere in his prayer. No one would have wondered if he could have heard him lording it over his wife, "I am the head of this house," and then could have listened to those hot words of impatience before leaving for church. If they had been in harmony, their prayers would have not been hindered. There can be no bosses and fusses in the home where prayers ascend like arrows, and the sunshine and smile of heaven abide. They harmonize in unselfishness and love, then their prayers are not hindered.

PRIDE

"The proud he knoweth afar off." "God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." Pride is another manifestation of a deeply rooted, self-centered life. "A heart full of pride is but a vessel full of air." This self-opinion must be gotten out of us before saving knowledge can be poured into us. Humility is the knees of the soul, and in that posture the Lamb will open the book; but pride stands upon tiptoes, as if she would snatch the book out of Christ's hands and unclasp it herself. A proud heart is like the barren mountain waste, too high and lofty for the grace of God to reach it. A proud heart is like rock or stone, and must be crushed before it can be-

come fruitful soil in the valley of humility. The mountain peaks are lofty, but barren; so the lofty looks of men must be brought low, and the Lord alone must be exalted. Take warning from Lucifer, who, because of pride was brought low. Prayers never can ascend through the clouds of pride and lofty looks.

ROBBING GOD

I shall give you only God's Word in this particular, Malachi 3:8-10: "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.

"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." Here we have God's eternal promise which cannot be broken. If bringing the tithes into the storehouse will open heaven to us, then refusing or neglecting to bring the tithes will close the heavens over us. Let us put God to the test and bring in the tithes, and see if it will not help us to get our prayers through.

We have tarried a little at the point of hindrances to prayer, for we have been made sure by our own experiences and the experiences of others that loose, thoughtless praying, regardless of heart conditions, has greatly hindered our prayer life.

Let us burn away the clouds, the fog, the "smog" from over our heads so that there shall be nothing between our prayers and the Savior.

"Nothing between, Lord, nothing between;
Let me Thy glory see,
Draw my soul close to Thee,
Then speak in love to me—
Nothing between.

"Nothing between, Lord, nothing between;
Let not earth's din and noise
Stifle Thy still small voice;
In it let me rejoice—
Nothing between.

"Nothing between, Lord, nothing between;
Nothing of earthly care,
Nothing of tear or prayer,
No robe that self may wear—
Nothing between."

CHAPTER VII

PRAYING THROUGH TO VICTORY

"Everyone that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth" (Luke 11:10).

Someone asked, "What do you mean by praying through into divine presence?" I could only reply very simply, "Why, pray until you are *through.*" With all doubts and hindrances brushed away, we shall continue praying until with the poet we can say, "there is nothing between."

"Nothing between my soul and my Savior,
Naught of this world's elusive dream;
I have renounced all sinful pleasure,
Jesus is mine, let nothing between.

"Nothing between like worldly pleasure;
Habits of life, though harmless they seem,
Must not my heart from Him ever sever.
He is my all, let nothing between.

"Nothing between my soul and the Savior
So that His blessed face may be seen,
Nothing preventing the least of His favor,
Keep the way clear, let nothing between."

PRAYER CHANGES THINGS

As we have seen prayer to be vital, it must realize the divine presence, and lead the soul into communion with God. Prayer changes things. It does not change God's willingness, but it may change God's actions. In other

words it gives God an opportunity to do what He has long desired to do. Queen Esther's fasting and praying with her maidens did not change God's will and purpose to deliver His people, but it did prepare the way and change relationships so God could work for their deliverance from the plot of wicked Haman. Mordecai declared his faith when he informed Esther if she did not undertake, help would arise from some other source. He knew God was willing and all God wanted was a chance. Prayer changed everything in this bit of history. Prayer changed the relation of queen Esther, and this changed the attitude of the king, and thus the plans of Haman were defeated and the gallows for Mordecai was changed to a gallows for Haman, and the destruction of the Jews into a day of their salvation. Prayer may not change God's will or purpose, but it will change attitudes so He can do things to change results.

It has been said that prayer changes us, and not things. Truly prayer changes us and builds and strengthens the soul on its most holy faith, but prayer changes attitudes and relationships, therefore it changes things. It gives God a chance to do what He otherwise could not do without our full co-operation with His plans. Prayer does not dominate and control God and make Him do what He would not like to do, or dictate terms to God. Prayer brings us in harmony with God so He can do what He wills and longs to do for us and others. Prayer simply makes it possible for God to work in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure, and thus carry forward His work in the earth. Prayer opens larger opportunities for God to radiate His will and work out His own plans in

creating proper relationships. Prayer therefore will change things and change men.

DON'T STOP PRAYING

Many stop too soon. Just as the heavens are about to open they stop. Many are like king Joash whom Elisha told to smite on the ground with arrows. "And he smote thrice and stayed. . . . Thou shouldst have smitten five or six times; then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed it" (2 Kings 13:18, 19). Like Peter on the rolling waves they allow difficulties, white-capped billows of questions, to roll up between their vision and the Savior, so they begin to sink and never get through to Jesus.

There are some very clear directions given by our Lord about praying, and especially praying through. We are taught to pray, "ask," "seek," "knock." "I will that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting." "Pray always." "With all prayer." "Pray without ceasing." "Pray and not faint." Consider these expressions, read them over again. Do they admit of a sleepy, half-awake condition of the heart? Do they admit of mere saying prayers, going through some tedious forms; or a careless saying of childlike bedroom prayers: "Now I lay me down to sleep"? No, my brother, one must be intensely awake, interested, concerned, burdened, stirred to conditions, until the object is retained. There is no chance here for the modern, easy-going display of rhetoric, merely giving information to the Lord, which fills so many beautiful prayers in our days.

THE CHRIST METHOD

We read that our Lord continued all night in prayer. If it was necessary for Him, unto whom has been given

all power, and who healed the sick and did such wonderful works, to continue long in prayer; would it not be reasonable to say that His people should practice more all night praying? And may we not conclude that the strange and heavenly presence and power which accompanied His ministry, were obtained in such spiritual exercises as these all nights of prayer? We must not forget our Lord's very clear directions in the following expressions: "Every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." It is well to notice that these words, "asketh," "seeketh," "knocketh," are present participles, and denote action present and being continued. That is to say, while asking, seeking, knocking, one obtains the answer, "While ye are seeking me, I will be found." Many not only stop too quickly, but their seeking is only by spells.

Seeking at spells with long intermissions of carelessness, breaks the law of connection, and can never bring results. We must continue in prayer, hold on in prayer, never stop, keep right at it; never be turned aside for anything, keep on praying, pour out the heart. Do not become careless or indifferent; hold steady; keep right on in prayer and faith believing. Remember it is while asking, seeking, knocking, results are obtained. This is perfectly scientific. Combinations in matter illustrate this fact. Different elements combined form new substances. In the laboratory one can bring the different elements up to a certain heat, and stop short of the required temperature, without obtaining results. Frequently the process must be commenced all over again. So it is in successful prayer before the Lord. The attitudes and soul conditions must reach a certain given temperature, before there can

be the proper spiritual connection and combination to bring the desired results. These spiritual adjustments seem to be just as exact, if we would receive answers to prayers, as the material combination of elements are found to be in the world of matter. Multiplied illustrations might be given in air, water, and stone, to prove this exactness in matter. If we will meditate a moment over the success and failure in the ministry of prayer, we shall discover that failure is often the result of careless heart conditions on our part. As we proceed we shall discover attitudes in heart conditions, which are most vital for successful prayer. We cannot hope to be thorough in this brief treatise, but we shall try to emphasize a few conditions which if properly met, will greatly assist us in the ministry of prayer.

SOME CLEAR STATEMENTS

We are not left to question, for our Lord gave us very clear directions. If we follow these directions prayerfully and carefully, we have some guaranty of success; otherwise we shall lose sight of the importance of spiritual laws which govern in Christian experience.

1. We Should Ask in His Name. "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do that the Father may be glorified in the Son." What strange and wonderful power in that blessed name, "Jesus." "They shall walk up and down in my name." In the healing of the lame man at the beautiful gate of the temple, Peter declared, "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk."

"His name yields the richest perfume,
And sweeter than music His voice;

His presence disperses my gloom,
And makes all within me rejoice."

Through this name we have access unto the Father. "In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him." "For through him we have access by one Spirit unto the Father." There is only one name given under heaven and among men whereby we must be saved. All the fullness of the Godhead bodily is manifested in that sweet name. His deity and sonship with authority, His pure, spotless life of holiness in this world of sin, His sacrificial, atoning blood, which reconciles the soul to God, also His full authority and power as the administrator of the new covenant of grace, all His glorious presence as our intercessor at the right hand of the Father in which He is able to save us unto the uttermost —these all are contained in that glorious name.

"Jesus the name high over all
In hell or earth or sky,
Angels and men before it fall,
And devils fear and fly.

"Jesus, I love Thy charming name,
'Tis music to my ear;
Fain would I sound it out so loud
That heaven and earth might hear."

A very interesting story is told of a New York merchant, who having himself failed in business, continued only by the use of his brother's name. No one would give him credit to the amount of a single dollar. He had, however, a very rich brother living in the city of Boston, who was reported to be worth millions. This wealthy brother sent on to his unfortunate brother power of attorney, so the business was transacted in the rich brother's name.

The bankrupt brother secured quarters in the business center of New York, filled his store with goods, and commenced operations as a prosperous merchant, in the city of New York. In telling his story to a friend of his he said: "I will tell how much I am worth in reality in the city, I am practically just as rich as my brother is. I can purchase anything and live just as well as he can. Yet if I should presume to ask anything in my own name, no man would credit me to the amount of a single dollar. Once in a while, for my own amusement, I thus illustrate my position: I enter the store of an importer, and, having selected a quantity of goods, request him to send them to my store. 'To whom shall I charge them,' he inquires. 'To myself, of course,' I reply. 'I cannot do that,' is his prompt rejoinder. 'If your creditors should become aware that you had goods in that state, in your store, they would seize them at once and I would lose them forever.' I would then show him my power of attorney and remark, 'I will purchase the goods in my brother's name.' 'Take what you want,' is the prompt reply. In that name I could purchase anything that he had." So Christ has given to His faithful believers power of attorney and informs them simply to ask in His name. He gives us the same power as He would have Himself, in our circumstances of need. The Father cannot deny the Son, and the Son has bidden us ask, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

"Sweetest note in seraph song,
Sweetest name on mortal tongue,
Sweetest carol ever sung,
Jesus, blessed Jesus."

"Take the name of Jesus with you,
Child of sorrow and of woe;
It will joy and comfort give you,
Take it then, where'er you go."

To use the name of Christ without His consent or authority would be sacrilegious indeed. Think of signing another man's name on a bank check or draft! Conviction from earthly courts would be sure, and judgment would be meted out. This will never do. We must not use the name of Christ without given authority. Conditions must be met, right attitudes toward Christ must be reached, before we can approach heaven in His name. When our hearts flow out in submission to His will, either in repentance or consecration, His name becomes altogether lovely and the chiefest among ten thousand.

"His name yields the richest perfume,
And sweeter than music His voice;
His presence disperses my gloom,
And makes all within me rejoice."

In the power of Christ's name! The following beautiful incident illustrates the fact. William Reynolds, of Peoria, Ill., the earnest and successful Sunday school worker, tells the following story, which he heard from the missionary himself.

"The Rev. E. P. Scott, while laboring as a missionary in India, saw on the street one of the strangest looking heathen his eyes had ever lit upon. On inquiry, he found that he was a representative of one of the inland tribes that lived away in the mountain districts, and came down once a year to trade. Upon further investigation he found that the gospel had never been preached to them, and that it was very hazardous to venture among them be-

cause of their murderous propensities. He was stirred with earnest desire to break unto them the Bread of life. He sought divine guidance. Arising from his knees he packed his valise, took his violin, with which he was accustomed to sing, and his pilgrim's staff, and started in the direction of the Macedonian cry.

"As he bade his fellow missionaries farewell, they said, 'We shall never see you again. It is madness for you to go.' But he said, 'I must preach Jesus to them.'

"For two days he traveled on, scarcely meeting a human being, until at last he found himself in the mountains and was suddenly surrounded by a crowd of savages. Every spear was instantly pointed at his heart. He expected that every moment would be his last. Not knowing of any other resource, he tried the power of singing the name of Jesus to them.

"Drawing forth his violin he began with closed eyes to sing and play:

" 'All hail the power of Jesus' name!
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown Him Lord of all.'

"Being afraid to open his eyes he sang on through the third verse,

" 'Let every kindred, every tribe,
On this terrestrial ball,
To Him all majesty ascribe,
And crown Him Lord of all.'

"Then he opened his eyes to see what they were going to do, when lo! the spears had dropped from their hands, and the big tears were falling from their eyes.

"They afterward invited him to their homes. He

spent two and a half years among them. His labors were so richly rewarded that when he was compelled to leave them because of impaired health, and return to this country, they followed him for thirty miles, 'Oh, missionary,' they said, 'come back to us again. There are tribes beyond that never heard the gospel.' He could not resist their entreaties. After visiting America he went back again to continue his labors till he sank into his grave among them."

No devil has so powerful a hold on a human soul but that the power of Christ's name in answer to prayer, can cast him out. How wonderful the privilege of using the power of Christ's name in lifting the race Godward!

Truly the prophet had a wonderful vision of the power of His name, when he exclaimed, "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." Paul also had this wonderful loyalty to His all glorious name when he declared, "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth."

"Jesus, the name that charms our fears,
That bids our sorrows cease;
'Tis music in the sinner's ears,
'Tis life and health and peace."

"All hail the power of Jesus' name!
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem
And crown Him Lord of all."

In trying to use this name unlawfully, without right heart conditions beware lest the experience of those noted

men in the Acts of the Apostles, who tried to use this name without authority, should befall us. The record tells us how these men made an attempt to cast out devils, without right heart conditions, but the devils overpowered them, exclaiming, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are ye?" They were compelled to flee from the house naked and wounded. This emphasizes our position that right heart conditions are imperative in praying through. Right heart conditions with reverence for the name of Christ, is a combination in harmony with the laws of the spiritual world which brings things to pass.

2. THERE MUST BE LOYALTY TO THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." Christ not only must be near to us, but He must be dear to us. We must abide in Him. "To those that believe He is precious." In the realm of prevailing prayer, Christ Himself must become precious to the soul. The heart must sing in deep emotion:

"My Jesus, I love Thee, I know Thou art mine;
For Thee all the follies of sin I resign,
My gracious Redeemer, my Savior art Thou,
If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus, 'tis now.

"I'll love Thee in life, I will love Thee in death,
And praise Thee as long as Thou lendest me breath,
And say when the death dew lies cold on my brow,
If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus, 'tis now."

Right here in this hallowed attitude the soul abides in the secret place of the most High, under the shadow of the Almighty, where real prayer becomes a mighty force. Here every cloud is brushed away in the glory of His

divine presence. Here the heart in rapturous joy may sing:

"To Jesus every day I find my heart is closer drawn,
He's fairer than the glory of the gold and purple dawn,
He's all my fancy pictured in its fairest dreams and more,
Each day He grows still sweeter than He was the day before."

There can be no other lovers, there can be no other fond attractions which hold the attention, there can be no enticing invitations which would draw our attention away from our devotion to Christ. The heart must throb and beat with loyalty and devotion to Christ alone, if we would gain the victory.

When the Church drifts away from true devotion to Christ, and becomes willing to regard Him as only a man of human birth, or tries to tear Him from the high and lofty place accorded to Him in the Word, and regard His ministry as mere personal magnetism, having no appreciation of His all glorious sonship and deity, it will be no wonder that our prayers have no force, power and grip to bring revivals and awaken a sleeping world. If prayers are to pass through to the very presence of God, then Jesus must become the One altogether lovely and the fairest among ten thousand.

3. There Must Also Be Loyalty to His Word. To slight or disregard God's Word, is to do dishonor to the Father Himself, for He has revealed this fact that He has placed His Word above His name. How clearly Christ emphasized this: "And my words abide in you," then and only then are we promised, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name it shall be done unto you." Not only must we believe the Word, but Christ's Word must become precious unto us, sweeter than honey in the

honeycomb. His Word must find a place in our hearts: "thy law do I love." "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." The man who prays through must have his delight in the law of the Lord, and "in his law must he meditate day and night." If we are to pray through and enjoy the presence of God, there can be no slighting regard, or unkind criticism—much less anything that would indicate disloyalty to God's holy Word. Like the church of Thessalonica, God's Word must be received "not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the Word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe." God has placed His word above His name, then to question His Word or regard it as the word of man, must not only grieve His loving heart, but would indeed slander His veracity and break the union of our communication with the Infinite. In prevailing prayer God's Word becomes "a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path." Its vital importance is emphasized in the fact that God's Word is the very foundation of our faith. How sure it is, as a foundation, for there can be no change. "For ever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven," "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away," is the declaration of our Lord. As food is the source of strength for the body, so the Word of Christ is the very life of the soul. "The words which I speak, they are spirit and they are life." Our Lord laid down this test of loyalty to His Word: "If a man love me he will keep my words." To criticize, doubt, or even slight the words of Christ, is to throw us out of harmony with all spiritual verities of divine presence and blessing. Our Lord clearly emphasized this one important fact, that we must be in harmony with His Word, believe His Word,

and have His Word abiding in us, as one of the essential prerequisites in effectual prayer. But why should we doubt it or question it? It never has failed.

How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in His excellent word;
What more can He say, than to you He hath said?
Ye who unto Jesus for refuge have fled!

In every condition, in sickness and health,
In poverty's vale, or abounding in wealth,
At home or abroad, on the land, on the sea.
As thy days may demand shall thy strength ever be.

4. THERE ARE AT LEAST TWO VITAL FACTS WHICH MUST BE OBSERVED. In coming boldly unto the throne of grace, in which the heart may have perfect confidence to look into the Father's face, two attitudes of the soul are most vital:

First, Care should be exercised in every effort to shun all appearance of evil. It may be well to note how Paul in 1 Thess. 5:22, 23 places this as one of the needful conditions to enter that glorious experience known as sanctification. "Abstain from all appearance of evil." Then adds, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly." The aversion to all evil must carry with it the desire to even shun the very appearance of evil. If this is thus a condition to obtain the blessing it must also remain a condition to maintain the blessing, and moreover a vital attitude of the heart in the ministry of prayer. Any carelessness to shun all appearance of evil in habits of life, in all associations, and in every manner of living, will greatly weaken effort in the ministry of prayer. Great carefulness at this point will greatly strengthen our influence with men, as well as give us favor with God.

Second, In deciding every question we must give God the benefit of the doubt. If questions should arise as to the right or wrong regarding any action or course in life, then be sure to take sides with God and give Him the benefit of every doubt and question. "If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things." It is impossible to exercise faith for anything while the heart is in question over the right and wrong of any course in life. "But if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God." The conclusion of this argument is very clear, for if we have this faith or confidence, then "Whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things which are pleasing in his sight."

"While we do His good will
He abides with us still,
And with all who will trust and obey."

CHAPTER VIII

PRAYING THROUGH, ITS CONDITIONS

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find" (Luke 11:9).

In continuing our study of the question of praying through, it will be well for us to remember that what follows in Luke eleven is an answer to the request in the first verse, "Teach us to pray." Christ not only by precept, but by example as well, was teaching the Church to pray. In the verses which follow (in what is known as the Lord's prayer, which in reality is an outline of heart conditions to enable one to pray through) our Lord clearly emphasizes other necessary conditions, their combinations, in teaching the divine art of prayer. A careful reading of these verses will bring out the fact that our Lord not only taught them to pray but that prayer must be continued, and that while in the exercise of prayer and faith, one really prays through, and obtains his desire: "He receives and finds," and to him it is opened, while he is asking, seeking and knocking.

CONDITIONS

As we study these verses of Luke eleven, in our Lord's answer to the disciples' request, we shall discover more conditions in praying through. We have emphasized in many places and in many ways the necessity of right relations and proper conditions in the adjustment of fixed principles to obtain results. Natural law is so filled with

illustrations so common to all, that we need not again emphasize the necessity of exact adjustments in conditions to obtain results. What we find in nature we find in grace. Right conditions are vital, imperative and indispensable.

DEFINITENESS

1. In the illustration of this lesson, Christ presses home the need of definiteness. So many in their prayer, pray for nothing in particular. This is true in public prayer, both in family worship, and in the leading of congregational worship. Such prayers are intended more especially to lead the worshipers in devotion, and necessarily cover a wider range of interest. Nevertheless the heart should be trained to definite seeking. Public prayer should partake of the element of inspiration and helpfulness, so that others may unite in faith. We cannot emphasize too strongly the necessity of definiteness whether in public or private. Better say ritualistic prayers or read prayers, than to beat around the bush and never get anywhere in some indefinite objective never to be obtained. In the illustrations given, our Lord clearly mentions "bread" or a "fish" in these expressions, "If a son shall ask bread," "if he shall ask a fish," "if he shall ask an egg." Notice how definite the object. It is not "Give me anything," or "something," or "more of something" to make me feel better. But we may place the emphasis on "bread," "fish," and "egg." We are thus taught to become positive and definite, or in other words to name the object. We are to have some particular burden or some special request. It would be better for us to be more brief in our requests, asking for a few things and getting them, rather than to ask for nothing in particular, over a

wide range of indefiniteness. It might be well for us frequently to review our prayers and outline the definite objects which we have before us.

NECESSITY

2. Our Lord teaches us that our requests should be limited to necessary things. If the son should ask for "bread," "fish," or an "egg," not some foolish plaything which was not vital. Any father might be compelled to refuse the request of his son for mere playthings, but what father could refuse his son "bread," "fish," or an "egg," as food to supply his hunger? These articles of food are among the necessities of life. Would a loving father disappoint a hungry boy and give him a stone, or torment him with a serpent, or ruin him with a scorpion? The conclusion is so clear that no loving father would deny the real needs of his son, and the argument is strong that the seeking souls after real needs will never be disappointed by its heavenly Father. We are assured that our heavenly Father will never withhold any good thing from them that walk uprightly. One of our preachers, looking at the worn shoes of his wife, remarked, "Why you must have a new pair of shoes." "No," was her quick reply, "I do not need them." "But just see how worn those are," said he. But she quickly returned these words, "If I really needed them the Lord would send them for He has promised to supply all my needs, according to His riches in glory through Christ Jesus." We are invited to "come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of NEED." This fact of need is vital in the realm of prayer.

EARNESTNESS

3. Earnestness has a place in praying through. We are taught to ask, seek and knock. Asking is a public acknowledgment of our desires, seeking is earnestness in action, but knocking is intensified earnestness demonstrated. The soul is thus so earnest and determined that there is perfect willingness that earnest desires shall be made known by knocking at the door of heaven. We have the story which our Lord told of a certain man whose friend came to him at the late hour of midnight, after a long and wearisome journey very hungry. The man although disappointed in finding nothing in his own cupboard with which to supply the needs of his hungry friend, was stirred even at the midnight hour to make a desperate effort. He went out in the darkness of the midnight hour in search of a neighbor friend where he might obtain the needed bread to satisfy the hunger of his visitor. His obstacles were many. The hour was midnight, and it was dark. On arriving at the home of his neighbor he found the lights out and everyone in bed. It seemed desperate indeed to disturb the sleepers and get them out of bed in the middle of the night. But his needs were desperate and he was determined to have bread at any cost. He knocked, and repeatedly knocked, and finally was able to awaken the man of the house. At first his neighbor was disappointed, grieved and could not understand such a request at such a time as this. The man tried to explain, but was met with a request to postpone the matter until morning. But this would not do. Now that he had awakened signs of life, he more earnestly sought and importuned. Our Lord explained that it was because of his importunity that his neighbor

arose and gave him all that he needed. The supply was not granted on the ground of friendship but because of this troublesome, urgent, pressing demand at his very door. Surely if the illustration of our Lord given in this Scripture means anything, it implies earnestness. This was one of the outstanding facts in Elijah's successful prayer, which opened heaven and brought rain after three years of drouth. The Scripture states, "He prayed earnestly." This strange ingredient "earnestness" which is nothing less than deliberate determination, is rewarded in obtaining the desired end. "Ye shall seek me and find me when ye seek for me with all your heart." God has never pledged to answer cold rhetoric or half-hearted prayers. It was said of our Lord, in the garden of Gethsemane, "he being in agony prayed the more earnestly." It is not long praying, but it is soul earnestness in prayer.

IMPORTUNITY

4. We must mention importunity as another ingredient necessary if we get results. Here is a word full of heart throb and passion. In making the explanation of the delay in obtaining bread from the friend in the above illustration, our Lord used the words, "He arose and gave him as much as he would, not because he was his friend but because of his importunity." This word importune is variously defined. Its root meaning seems to be "hard of access, pressing, urging, vexatious, anxiety, on account of timely urgency or pertinacious solicitation."

Possibly no other statement so emphasizes this word as the following statement made by our Lord: "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." The forces against the kingdom of

heaven in satanic majesty are violent and destructive, the kingdom of heaven in turn is waiting for men of violent faith, violent intercessory prayer, and violent determination to conquer the forces of evil. Importunity carries with it intensified and continued earnestness with pleading in prayer and supplication. We have an example of this in Jacob's all-night of prayer. The picture is one of a desperate struggle through the long weary hours of the night, refusing to let go, crying, "I will not let thee go except thou bless me." On he struggled still firmly holding in his grasp the object of his search. He struggles through his physical weakness, for the angel has already touched his thigh. The angel insists, "Let me go," but Jacob will not unloose his hold. Thus he clung with his all-conquering hold, he pleaded, he prevailed, he conquered.

"Come O thou traveler unknown,
Whom still I hold, but cannot see,
My company before is gone,
And I am left alone with Thee.
With Thee all night I mean to stay
And wrestle till the break of day.

"In vain Thou strugglest to get free,
I never will unloose my hold;
Art Thou the Man that died for me?
The secret of Thy love unfold.
Wrestling I will not let Thee go
Till I Thy name, Thy nature, know.

"Lame as I am, I take the prey,
Hell, earth, and sin with ease o'ercome,
I leap for joy, pursue my way,
And as a bounding hart fly home."

We have another example of earnestness, such as the effectual prayer of Abraham when he sought for the safety of Lot from the burning flames of Sodom. How Abraham reasoned with the angel of divine presence, how he gathered the arguments and forces, pleading on the ground of divine pity and mercy. Step by step and hand over hand he climbed nearer to the very light of tender compassion. "Wouldst thou destroy the city if only ten righteous people could be found?" We well remember the results. Abraham had found the secret of praying through. Again we may see Elijah on the mount alone with God. With bended form, in humble posture, he buries his face in his hands between his knees. He could not and would not let go. He must have rain in answer to his cry. Six times he received a discouraging report, not a cloud to be seen, not even as big as a man's hand. The second or third time most people would have stopped, the fifth time nearly all would have forsaken the place of prayer. Not so with Elijah. He refused to give up or be discouraged even with seeming failure. Hours before this his faith had caught the joyful sound of the abundance of rain. It was not until after he had prayed the seventh time, was his faith rewarded with even the smallest indication of a rising cloud, and that not bigger than a man's hand. But this gave evidence that the spiritual laws were perfect and God was working in the natural world, and he leaped to his feet in triumph to prepare for the oncoming storm. We must never forget that soul earnestness played a large part in praying through.

FASTING

5. We must mention here prayer and fasting. It has been a serious problem in the minds of many: What part fasting could have in the ministry of prayer. We should remember the experience of our Lord and the disciples coming down from the mount of transfiguration. He found some of His disciples in sad defeat in their effort to cast out evil spirits from a child, as recorded by Matthew. At the word of Christ the evil spirit was conquered at once and the child delivered. After this experience His disciples asked Him why they could not cast him out. His simple reply was, "This kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting." We cannot thus avoid the conclusion, that fasting has a real place in the ministry of prayer. We shall not dwell on the physical blessings which often accrue from fasting, but no one need to fear any serious physical difficulties or harmful results from reasonable fasting. Without doubt there is greater danger in overeating, but we more especially emphasize the spiritual blessings that may follow fasting and prayer. Fasting most assuredly is a demonstration of our sincerity. Insincerity never goes to the limit of physical inconvenience. Fasting will greatly assist in strengthening our purpose and help us in the concentration of our desire. It will also give time for more complete confession of our helplessness and dependence upon God. Fasting often awakens a clearer vision of God and increases faith in His veracity. Fasting has a strong tendency to strengthen our will to continue to the very end. It will also assist in stirring all of our inward forces to succeed. Fasting should not be made a means of paying penance, a way of torturing ourselves to obtain divine favor. This vision in

fasting will fail. But when fasting works in our nature a deeper sense of our dependence upon God and our utter helplessness without Him, we shall find fasting a gracious means of faith, and helpful in the ministry of prayer.

FERVENCY

6. We must mention fervency as the most important factor in the ministry of prayer. "The effectual *fervent* prayer of a righteous man availeth much." By fervency we do not mean physical exercise or boisterous praying. It would doubtless carry with it at times vocal earnestness, but fervency is something deeper than earnestness. Fervency in prayer is one step beyond earnestness or importunity. While earnestness is intensified seeking, and importunity is intensified earnestness, fervency is importunity intensified into a white-heated soul passion which reaches the climax of prayer. The heart must blaze, burn, glow, in the white light of divine presence.

There is a wealth of meaning wrapped up in that text, "Faith which worketh by love." The motive back of faith that prompts the action of faith will largely determine the results obtained. Remember, when Hannah prayed through, her motherly heart was first moved with unselfish desire, for that baby boy Samuel was to be the Lord's, all the days of his life. And the price which she paid opened heaven for a larger family and the rich favor of God. Fervency of spirit is the melted flow from an unselfish, loving, throbbing heart, all for the glory of God.

"Long you have prayed at the throne of His grace,
Shed bitter tears in that sweet hallowed place;
Yet though it seem He is hiding His face,
Keep on praying, God will answer prayer."

"Plead with the God of love,
Pray, Christian, pray;
Call on the throne above,
Pray, Christian, pray.
Ask, for the need is sore;
Seek for the secret store;
Knock at His mercy's door,
Pray, Christian, pray.

"Plead every promise old,
Pray, Christian, pray;
O for faith more bold!
Pray, Christian, pray.
Let not thy soul appall,
Satan is doomed to fall!
Christ shall be Lord of all:
Pray, Christian, pray."

CHAPTER IX

FAITH OR SPIRITUAL SIGHT IN PRAYER

"If thou canst BELIEVE" (Mark 9:23-24).

Faith is the greatest essential in spiritual vision, effectual prayer, and holy communion. "Without faith it is impossible to please God." Faith lies at the very foundation of spiritual experience. "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." A true conception of God is most vital. To question His personality or wisdom, or the plentitude of His power, or disregard His authority as the self-existent, determinate One, the ever-present infinite Being, the great "I Am," is to cloud the vision and make impossible any successful approach in spiritual experience. To place an "if," a question, a fear, between our coming and His faithfulness as a rewarder, and thus throw the blame back on God if we do not obtain an answer is to prevent our successful approach. Faith must grip the faithfulness of God. If there is failure, the cause must rest in our carelessness in not reaching the conditions specified: "them that diligently seek him."

DEFINITION

There seems to be a mystery about faith, "holding mystery of the faith." Faith has been defined in several ways. "Faith is the hand that takes things from God." There is a great truth here, but this definition only tells what faith does, not what it is. Others have stated that

faith is heart union with God, and here again is a partial truth. In the definition given by the Apostle Paul, in Hebrews eleventh chapter and first verse, we have some clear facts set before us. "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Hope is made up of desire and expectation, therefore faith being the substance must imply that faith makes real, or realizes to the soul when filled with sincere desires and expectation. Faith being the evidence of things not seen, would clearly imply that faith must be a conviction resting upon sure evidences of the reality of things not seen. Dr. P. F. Bresee defined faith as "trustful heart loyalty to God." Surely this is the poise of faith, and two of its essential elements. It would seem that there is at least one more element to faith to make it active and aggressive, namely, "A persuasion of truth." May we state it as follows: Faith is a persuasion of truth in a trustful and loyal heart to God. Thus we have included in the statement the following: First, the consent of the understanding or intellect. Second, The assent of the will or loyalty of purpose, and Third, Trust of the heart. Faith rests upon divine evidence, and when the evidences are adequate, faith is as reasonable and scientific as any cause in nature. Faith is a moving force in loyalty to God and His will which trustfully rests in God for results. There are several kinds of faith—historical, intellectual, doctrinal, and heart faith. "A faith that works by love." "With the heart a man believeth . . . unto righteousness." "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest." The saving faith must flow from the heart. "Out of the heart are the issues of life." The reason or judgment must submit, the intellect must be persuaded,

convicted. The will must swing into harmony with God in loyal submission. The heart must move the whole being Godward in trust and confidence.

TRUST AND VISION

Faith is to the soul what the eye is to the body. The eye is the organ of sight, but not sight itself. The eye may be perfect but without vision, for the will may close the eyelid and refuse to see, or there may be no sunlight to impress the object on the sensitive optic nerves to give vision. We must not confuse the faith faculty, which is in the understanding and intellect, and is natural to all men, with faith which is a result of an active will, like vision or sight. Christ gave us the key: "If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be filled with light." There are three essential things in vision and sight: First, there must be the eye, or sight faculty. Second, there must be light to fill the retina of the eye, and Third, the reflected object to touch the sensitive nerves and give conscious vision. Thus it is in faith. The faith faculty must be open and receptive with a will to believe. Then truth, God's Word, the radiating pure light, golden sunbeams of divine revelation, which fasten the objects to be obtained in the sensitive center of our being, the heart. Then faith is real. "With the heart man believeth." The flashing light of truth brings the eternal verities into conscious reality.

"Faith the promise sees and
Clings to that alone,
Laughs at impossibilities and
Cries it shall be done."

Faith is the result of facts. It is impossible to separate the eye from light and have sight. So it is impossi-

ble to separate the faith faculty from divine truth and have saving faith. All men have the faith faculty. They can see and understand material things grounded upon evidences. Why do they not see and understand spiritual things? "Eyes they have but see not." "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God," for "they are spiritually discerned." They can discern the face of the sky, but cannot see spiritual things. Why? They are looking with the faith faculty in the wrong direction. They must open their intellectual faculties and turn their faces Godward. "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." This radiating light of truth shines forth from our glorious Lord and Savior. No one can get it anywhere else. Then, on our part, we "with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

FAITH IS SIMPLE

"The word is nigh thee, the word of faith, which we preach." "If thou shalt believe in thine heart," (will to do His will, will to believe with all thine heart) "thou shalt be saved." Will and keep on willing. Look and keep on looking. "If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." There must be an active, aggressive, putting forth of the whole being in full confidence and trust. "The just shall live by faith." In fact the just can live no other way but in the atmosphere of faith. The breath which purifies the lifeblood through lung action, to be sent through the whole system by the heart, is the same breath which gives force in expression

So it is with faith. The breath of spiritual life is the presence of the divine Spirit, which sends pure life through the soul and gives force in testimony. With the heart man believeth, but with the mouth confession unto salvation is made. "But we are not of them who draw back, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul." God has put the two great blessings of the gospel, justification and sanctification, within the reach of all. The same process of faith that saves the soul through justifying grace and sanctifying power is the very same kind of faith that operates in prevailing prayer before the Lord. Simple faith lives in the light of God's Word. Miss Havergal, in "Prevailing Prayer" by Weigle, is quoted as having said: "Every year, I might say almost every day, I believe, I seem to see more clearly how all the rest and gladness and power of the Christian life hinge on one thing, and that is, taking God at His Word—believing that He really means exactly what He says, and accepting the very words in which He reveals His goodness and grace, without substituting others, or altering the precise moods or tenses which He has seen fit to use."

Mr. Mueller (than whom, perhaps, no human being has more fully trusted God) says: "In the simplest manner in which I am able to express it, faith is the assurance that what God has said in His Word is true; and that God will act according to what He has said in His Word. This assurance, this reliance on God's Word, this confidence, is faith." In regard to the nature of his own faith (as some have said that his faith was the "gift of faith"), he says: "My faith is just the same kind of faith that all of God's children have had. My faith is their faith, though there

may be more of it, because my faith has been a little more developed, by exercise, than theirs."

FAITH AND ACTION

Faith and works are inseparable, for faith is action. "This is the work of God that ye believe." Rev. S. A. Keen gives a helpful illustration of the act of faith: "A professor in a university of the Pacific coast had been for ten years a seeker of full salvation. One day an aged minister called at his home. The conversation turned on Christian experience. The old man repeated what God had done for him. The professor said: 'Father, I have been seeking this blessing for ten years. I believe I have put all on the altar, and that I live with all on the altar, but I haven't received the power of sanctifying grace in my soul.' Said the old man: 'Do you want to receive it now?' The professor replied: 'Yes.' 'Well,' said the minister, 'let us kneel down here, and you may receive it now.' When on their knees, the minister asked, 'Professor, are you wholly given to God?' The professor replied: 'I believe I am.' 'You have put all on the altar?' 'Yes.' 'Well, professor, the Lord says, the altar sanctifieth the gift. Is it true or not?' He dared not give God the lie and replied, 'It is true!' And instantly he felt that the blood washed him whiter than snow."

I would like to make this point clear as to the nature of faith, if possible. It may be I can do this in the following incident: Some years ago one of my little boys was perched upon a high elevation with no hope of coming down by his own efforts. Standing just beneath him, I looked up and invited him to jump into my arms, while he could not see me, yet he could hear my voice. Of course he was fearful of falling, and somewhat excited. Half

crying with fright, I said to him, "Never mind son, Papa is right here, and I can catch you all right. Now jump." Then he replied, "Papa, are you there, I am going to jump." I said, "Come on son," and although he could not see me, but could hear my voice, he jumped, and of course was soon in my arms filled with joy and laughter. So it is with us. We have God's voice in His Word, faith rests upon it, and leaves God to take care of results.

WHY FAITH IS A CONDITION

First, because the faith faculty is universal. All may believe if they will. Second, it is necessary that men should be fully persuaded to receptive action, and faith is this persuasion or conviction of truth. Third, to save the soul from sin it is necessary to draw the soul away from sin unto the Lord. Real faith must center around divine personality and be persuaded of His ability and willingness. Then our faith leads us to Christ. Fourth, as salvation is equally provided for all, the condition of salvation must be equally possible for all, therefore it must be by faith. As salvation is a work to be wrought in the heart, and "with the heart man believeth," therefore faith is the proper medium. Fifth, as salvation is a revelation contained in the Word, and as faith rests upon evidence, all have the same foundation for salvation through faith. Sixth, Salvation is by faith that all glory may be given to God. "Not of works, lest any man should boast." Salvation is through faith alone that it may be by grace. This is one reason why God has honored faith and given it such an effective place in prayer. God necessarily takes pleasure in those who believe Him faithful, who trust His Word, who draw lovingly close to His person, who willingly step out on His promises and rest their all in His

loving care, who honor Him by asking largely of His infinite bounties.

REAL FAITH, ACHIEVING FAITH

There is a wide difference between intellectual faith, and faith that grips the heart and moves to action. Faith reaches the depth of infinite love and sweeps around the throne of mercy in the face of infinite justice, crying, "Nothing in my hands I bring, simply to thy cross I cling," while waves of pardon roll over the soul, with kisses of sweet forgiveness. Is not that achieving faith? Then faith, looking into the pure and radiant face of its triumphant Lord, in a heart longing for inward purity, declaring, "I loathe my inward sin," throws its arms of determinate purpose around the revealed will of God, throws open every avenue of the whole being in devoted sincerity for the white light of God's presence to electrocute and destroy sin and fill with His own sweet presence every part in sanctifying grace. Billows of cleansing power sweep away impurity and fill the being with heavenly joy. Is not that achievement? The very same faith holds steady in every storm, and rejoices in tribulation which brings out the rich trophies of patience, while patience, the master workman, molds and beautifies the experience, all radiant with sparkling diamonds of hope, while hope looks out and beyond the things of time and sense with its unshamed face of glorious expectancy. Is not this achievement? Somewhere I got this from a daily paper:

"Our faith must find its center of peace in a world of noise;
Amid the changing scenes of a world of men it must keep its poise;

And over the sorrowing sound of earth hear God's call:
A faith that will not do all—this is not faith at all."

Much of what some have called faith is not faith at all. There is a very wide difference between intellectual assent or consent and faith that moves the heart Godward. The very same faith which unites us with God is the very same kind of faith which is needed in mighty prayer for revivals. If the church would only use what faith they have there would soon be faith for greater achievements. The faith which wrought in personal experience in the sweet testimony of Abel's acceptance, and gave peace of soul in justifying grace in the life of Abraham, was the same kind of faith which crossed the Red Sea and Jordan's swelling tide, crumbled the walls of Jericho, and conquered the land of promise.

It is not needful to wait for some great wave of faith to sweep over one before beginning to believe God. Just begin right where you are and with what faith you have move out on the promise of God for large things. Undertake something that is worthy of one who has known the power of faith unto salvation. Do not doubt. Believe, and hold steady in faith, and know the joy of victory through faith.

No one will get great achieving faith by waiting for it. Faith comes by receiving, "hearing the word of God," using what you have. Faith will grow by exercise, from weak faith to strong in faith and on to greater faith, and from thence Christ may honor you by saying, "I have not seen so great faith, no not in Israel."

Abraham believed God over a long term of years and was rewarded for his faith in a God-given son who has blessed the world through his posterity. It is said that

George Mueller believed God over a period of forty years for the salvation of a friend and was finally rewarded with the joy of seeing this man brought to Christ.

TRIAL OF FAITH

Daniel's faith did not keep him from the lion's den, but through faith he was saved from the lion's mouth and delivered from the den. The faith of the three Hebrew children did not keep them from the fiery furnace, but did deliver them from its destructive blast. The faith of Paul and Silas did not keep them from the Philippian jail, but wrought a mighty revival in which the jailer and all his house was brought to God.

Faith must be real, no camouflage. For this reason faith must undergo its fiery trials. The trial may be long drawn out, as in the case of Abraham who steadfastly believed God for the fulfilment of His promise over twenty-four long years, and never staggered or faltered once but believed Him faithful that promised.

There may be heaviness—not the blues—through manifold temptation, that the trial of our faith—the testings, the long continued holding steady in times of waiting—may be found more precious than gold. Our Lord would have us know how sweetly our "light afflictions, which are but for a moment," will work out for us a "far more and exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things which are seen," which are temporal, but at the "things which are unseen and eternal."

FAITH AND PRAYER

We need the mighty triumphs of faith described in the eleventh of Hebrews. We must remember that this

faith was exercised in prayer. Prayer is a faith builder. Pouring out our desires creates faith. Expression of desires in real utterance helps to commit the heart to the will of God so that faith can spring forth into receptive expectancy. Believe all that you can believe, and act upon what faith you have, and your faith will grow instantly and exceedingly. Our Lord emphasized the method of faith's development in John 10:38: "If I do the works of my Father, though ye believe not me, believe the works, that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him."

Believe what you can believe, and you will know more and believe more. Here is the difference between the natural and the spiritual: The more we see with the natural eye the less we are impressed and moved by it. Not so with faith—the more we look with the eye of faith the more precious the object becomes and the clearer the vision. "If thine eye be single thy whole being shall be filled with light." This is why the woman could not be discouraged when rebuffed by our Lord. She had made up her mind to earnestly seek help for her daughter. Her gaze was steady. Her attention was fixed. Her vision was enlarged. Her faith could not waver. When told that it was not lawful to give the children's bread to dogs, her faith grasped the opportunity, her humility was complete. Glad to admit that she was a dog, she declared that as a dog she was entitled to the crumbs which fell down from the master's table, and the healing of her daughter was only a crumb as compared to the mighty provision and power of the One to whom she looked for

help. "Great is thy faith," was the instant response from our Lord.

This growing, persistent faith in the exercise of prayer clings with fingers of steel to the promise and the goodness of God, and refuses to let go. The angel of our struggle may cry, even plead "let me go," and give as a reason "For the day breaketh," but faith, determined, still firmly holds its grasp: "I will not let thee go except thou bless me." This last struggle will bring any needed humility and God will bless right there.

"My faith looks up to Thee,
Thou Lamb of Calvary,
Savior divine;
Take all my guilt away,
Wipe sorrow's tears away;
Oh let me from this day
Be wholly thine."

"Oh believe on Jesus now
As the bird on yonder bough
Trusts the branch on which it clings
While trusting, rests and sings,
So on Christ, the branch, confide,
True and trusty, strong and tried.
'Neath His clusters build thy nest,
Finding safety, food and rest."

FAITH IS VITAL

"Have faith in God." This is the great need of today. Faith is the great moving force in society, church and nation. What strange power moves the farmer to harness the horses, enter the barren field, dead with winter's chilly winds, without the sign of leaves or budding tree, and plough the cold soil and scatter the seed broad-

cast over the land? He heeds not the cold winds, for to him nature is not dead but sleepeth, soon to awake in bursting buds and green fields. He looks beyond the difficulties and sees the ripened grain. The seaman leaves the rock-bound shores, and moves out upon the trackless sea with perfect faith in that little needle, which might be taken by some thoughtless child as a mere toy. With this same confidence what could we not accomplish for Christ and His Church. Heroism inspired by convictions, which is one necessary element of faith has accomplished much. It was such heroic faith that moved Columbus to leave his native land in search of a new world. Had it not been for such heroism inspired by faith there would not have been a Parthenon, or the pyramids of Egypt. Nor would there have been a Thermopylæ to grace the pages of history, or a memorable Marathon. Had it not been for deeds inspired by such heroic faith, history would have been robbed of its interest, and its pages dead with cold facts. Heroism of natural faith has moved the explorer through the frigid zones of the North, climbed the barren mountain peaks, forded swollen streams and raging torrents, tunneled the hills and bridged the rivers, builded our sky scrapers and carried our railways like network across the country.

With faith resting upon divine promise, where there cannot be a failure, what should be our possibilities in the realm of grace?

"Oh for a faith that will not shrink,
Though pressed by every foe,
That will not tremble on the brink
Of any earthly woe.

"A faith that shines more bright and clear
When tempests rage without;
That when in danger knows no fear,
In darkness feels no doubt.

"Lord, give me such a faith as this,
And then, whate'er may come,
I'll taste e'en here the hallowed bliss
Of an eternal home."

CHAPTER X

PRINCIPLES THAT GOVERN FAITH

"Where is YOUR *faith?"* (Luke 8:25).

As faith is a combination of conditions or attitudes, a conviction of truth in a loyal heart, with trustful poise, there must be laws which govern faith's activity. While we are saved by faith alone, without religious works, saving or keeping or achieving faith is never dead. Faith cannot exist apart from activity, or as James puts it, "without works." Faith is never dry, and it is impossible to take anything by dry faith. There may be dry presumption or dry intellectual assent to truth, and there may be an intellectual faith which creates fear, for the "devils also believe and tremble," but faith that rests on God's Word as a conviction of truth flowing from a trustful, loyal heart, will be alive and filled with heaven's fullness of blessing.

SOME PRINCIPLES

We cannot attempt any thorough treatment of this question, but as it is so close to the subject of spiritual life and holy communion in divine presence, and is so vital in prevailing prayer in the heavenlies, we must hint at a few laws of faith or some principles which must be considered in the exercise of faith.

Faith is like the atmosphere which surrounds our earth, through which the arrows of light are scattered in radiating sunshine to give light. Scientists tell us that if

there were no atmosphere there could be no sunlight. So with the presence of God. Where there is not faith, there is no realized presence of God. Sin, doubt, fear, produce a veil or darkness over the soul because there is no atmosphere of faith. God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. When the soul believes, the atmosphere of faith instantly radiates the light of His presence. "But God, who maketh the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

THE WORD

1. Faith is vitally associated with truth, eternal verities. While faith rests upon evidence and must be reasonable, the God-given evidences are vital. God's Word is alive with spiritual power. "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life," is the declaration of our Lord. It is clearly reasonable to believe that creation must have had a Creator, and that this Creator must be infinite in power and wisdom. As the Author of my being, it is reasonable to believe that He is benevolently concerned in my well-being and care. Realizing my weakness and limitations, the only reasonable thing for me, as one of His creatures, is to love and trust Him. With infinite Goodness, who cannot lie, standing ready, ever urging us to "Come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need," I am persuaded, convicted, to flee unto Him, "whose arm is not shortened nor his ear heavy." Therefore faith is just as reasonable, and governed by laws as reasonable, as any of nature's laws with which we are so familiar.

FAITH AND THE WORD

"Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God." As faith rests upon the Word and is a conviction of truth, there can be no failure in faith.

"Faith the promise sees,
And clings to that alone;
Laughs at impossibilities,
And cries it shall be done."

The faith faculty, like the sight faculty, the eye, may be misdirected and deceived, and there may be presumption and all kinds of dry experiences; but there can be no failure when the eye of faith lives in the light of eternal truth and is made single by determined purpose to be true. Our Lord gave the results: "Thy whole body shall be filled with light." There are degrees of faith. From no faith to faith, to little faith, to greater faith, to growing faith, to perfect faith, but the laws are just the same. Faith rests alone upon divine evidences, the eternal verities: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." "Forever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven," is the God-given assurance. Again we say, faith that rests upon God's Word can never fail, the prayer of faith must be effectual.

FAITH ALONE IN GOD

2. Faith must rest alone in God. There must be separation from compromise. There must be no reliance upon others or their good pleasure. "How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?" Faith must rest alone in the eternal Being. There can be no idols, no fear of what others may think or say, no love before God. Like Paul, there must be a full deliverance from the peo-

ple, "delivering thee from the people and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee"—saved from the man-fearing spirit or mere pleasing attitude. Then alone with God we may realize

"My faith looks up to Thee,
Thou Lamb of Calvary,
Savior divine."

The first step in Jacob's experience of his all-night wrestle with the angel was "He was left alone." As our sainted Dr. Bresee would say: "Out in the solitudes of God's presence there is room for only two feet." No one can stand with you, for real faith springs from the heart, and must touch if but only the hem of His garment.

Here we stand in reverence and holy awe. Abraham, alone with God, fell upon his face. Jacob in that lonely night at Bethel declared, "How dreadful is this place!" Out in the solitudes, alone with God, is where we shall come face to face with Him. Here faith lives, thrives, blazes into mighty force which turns death to life, darkness into light, weakness into strength, sorrow into joy. Faith moves out into the infinite possibilities and becomes the very "substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

HARMONIOUS RELATIONS

3. Faith must have harmonious relationships with God to live and thrive. In the parable of the sower our Lord mentioned one class as having received the word, but because there was no depth of earth they soon withered away. Faith must be deeply seated in the holy purpose to be right at any cost. If there is any slight rebellion, or one sin not repented of, or one sin not properly confessed, it will neutralize faith and destroy all its

power to unite with God in effectual prayer. Any holding back of even a part of the price from full consecration to all the sweet will of God, will so neutralize faith as to cause the soul to draw back and fail of the reward of complete deliverance. There must be a swinging clear of all earthly ties. Every bridge must be burned behind, and the whole being must move in harmonious accord with revealed truth. In other words, one must walk in the light as he is able to see the light, and move in harmony with spiritual light and power.

As one has said, "Faith is the chorister of the soul, which leads all the graces into harmonious melodies to enrich the heavenly music of perfect love." Faith with directing hand leads virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, kindness, charity—the heavenly choir of graces—into the rhythm of sweetest melodies, which unite in one harmonious whole to produce the ennobling song of the soul.

Oh, glorious harmony with the Infinite! How thrilling the heavenly melodies as they roll in sublime raptures in the sweet will of God! How faith triumphs over all the songs of the worldly sirens. The disturbing "statics" of carnal desire are all eliminated from the atmosphere in the presence of God, and the holy music now rolls and echoes only the sweet will of God. Here faith grows, becomes strong, mounts higher in its accomplishments. Faith thus reaches harmonious relationships with God and finds its rightful place as one of the great laws which govern in the spiritual world.

SPIRITUALITY SUPREME

4. Faith must live in the realm of the unseen and the supernatural. Faith is dead when we want to feel or

see with our natural senses. Faith can live only apart from the material. Faith must rest in the words of Christ even before there is sight. "Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?" And again, "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." While we cling to the things of time and material sense, and try to find God by human reason only, and judge spiritual things by material laws, there is no place for faith. Faith is not only weakened but becomes dead and lifeless. "Faith sweeps out infinitely beyond the skyline of all human ability and possibilities." Faith undertakes the humanly impossible and accomplishes its greatest undertakings.

A crisis is not a disappointment, is not a calamity to real faith, but a glorious opportunity. Real faith declares with its Lord, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God." This disappointment, this temptation, this strange experience is not unto ruin, faith triumphantly declares, but for the glory of God in the manifestation of resurrection power. Every tomb of our human weakness may be opened that every Lazarus of our disappointed hopes may walk forth in greater blessing, with stronger testimony to the all-conquering Christ. As someone has stated: "Faith languishes and dies in the presence of ordinary and commonplace things, but grows and develops and thrives and achieves in the presence of the humanly impossible." Faith refuses to judge after the "sight of the eye or the hearing of the ear," but rather is prone to compare spiritual things with spiritual power. Faith refuses to limit the Holy One of Israel to human possibilities or material capacities. The eagle eye of faith reaches beyond the mortal sense and clearly beholds the

infinite One, who is a Spirit, and never fails to worship in spirit and in truth. Winged upon its mighty pinions of prayer, faith soars above in the supernatural and with its eagle eye pierces the world unseen.

With faith, even afflictions are but for a moment, working out for us a far more and exceeding and eternal weight of glory, "while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen, for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal." Faith holds spiritual things as supreme, and spiritual power as above, spiritual presence all and in all.

MUSTARD SEED FAITH

5. Faith must be put to some purpose. "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed," nothing shall be impossible to you, is the clear statement of our Lord. Mustard seed faith has been the subject of many a sermon, and we shall not attempt any outline of its many qualities in this connection. It may be simply stated: The most important thing about a mustard seed is that it has life in its nature. Faith like a mustard seed, has potential forces locked up in its very being. A future mustard tree is there in embryo. But the mustard seed must be used, exercised, placed in its natural environments. All this tiny seed needs is proper soil, air, water and sunshine, and a mustard tree is guaranteed. Mustard seed put into ice or dry ashes can do nothing; it is helpless; but when placed into proper relationship with the intended elements, it will work wonders in God's mysterious laboratory. So it is with faith. When put to no purpose it will remain alone and inactive. Hide faith away in the dry ashpile of presumption, and it will accomplish nothing.

Place faith in the warm soil of holy purpose, with a burdened heart, kissed with the sunshine of divine presence, and watered by the showers of God's grace, and it will remove mountains of difficulties although towering high and lofty. Leave faith carelessly lying around unused, and like a mustard seed it will be in danger of destruction from insects or birds which may take its life. Faith, like this small seed, is worthless if the heart is gone. We should take special care of our faith that the worm of doubt shall not take its heart and leave nothing but the dry kernel.

Notice how Christ adds, with strong emphasis, "and doubt not in your heart." Doubt in the heart takes the life out of faith. With this dead shell nothing can be started and nothing sprouted in spiritual things. No wonder that so little is accomplished in our land with only shells and hulls for faith. How can we expect a harvest with nothing but hulls—no life, no heart for seeds of faith? There may be mighty possibilities in the soil of our present opportunities with plenty of God's rich sunshine of divine favors, but nothing will come from dead faith—no heart, only hulls. How we need to get back to the living faith by which our fathers won their illustrious victories.

A CLEAR CONSCIENCE

6. The heart must be free from all condemnation, or faith can never become active. "If our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God." On the other hand, if our heart condemn us God is greater, and He knows all things. Faith will not operate when there are serious questions unsettled. We shall be compelled to give God the benefit of every doubt and shun all appear-

ance of evil. When the heart yields and one begins to walk in the light, how quickly the heart moves in faith unto salvation. With more light on the question of heart cleansing, as one walks in the light, the blood cleanses by faith from all sin. The law of faith in justifying grace is the very same law in the deeper work of heart cleansing, "for herein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith." That is, from justifying grace to sanctifying grace. The very same law must be observed in all spiritual communion.

In the eleventh chapter of Hebrews Paul makes no difference between the faith of Abel, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, and the faith which wrought miracles, or the faith of Moses which moved him to make the choice of his life. A glance at this great faith chapter, the eleventh of Hebrews, will call our attention to some of the important facts which we have already mentioned. The submissive faith of Abel was emphasized by his sacrifice of the lamb. The faith of Enoch in a personal God from whom he obtained favor and fellowship through the long years of companionship, gives clear evidence that his faith was centered in God as a personal Father. The implicit faith of Noah in the veracity of God as He warned Noah of the oncoming flood, is an example of simple faith in the word of the eternal One. The obedient faith of Abraham, the triumphant faith of Sarah, which judged Him faithful that promised, the faith which gave the clearer vision of that better country, the faith which moved Moses to attempt his great life work as one of the greatest leaders in all history, is the very same kind of faith which rolled back the foaming Red sea, that laid low the stately walls of Jericho, that victoriously

crossed the swelling waters of the angry Jordan when it overflowed its banks, subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, quenched the violent flames of a heated furnace, calmed the hungry lions to spare the endangered life of Daniel the prophet. Here is a record of a faith which justified, purified, and kept the obedient, and the same kind of faith wrought miracles and achieved mighty victories.

Faith must have a sufficient foundation, this foundation is in the Word of the living God. Faith must flow from the heart, hence the heart must respond with all loyalty to all the will of God. Faith must work by love, fired with the earnest devotion of sincerity.

There are special times of intensified faith for mightier things from God, when it is easier to believe than at other times. Yet when faith is carefully analyzed we shall find that the special gifts of faith have the same nature, and work according to given principles. All may cultivate faith and develop larger measures of faith by meditation and exercise. There is only one way to begin, namely use what faith you now have. Do not wait for more before acting. Move out onto the promises of God in full confidence, with all the faith you now possess. Hold steady in the trying hours, resist the enemy and still believe. Will to believe more and more, keep up the exercise in full determination to accept all the will of God at any cost. Do not draw back, but push steadily on to victory. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith." Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life. Fight doubts? Yes, but more especially contend for the faith once for all delivered unto the saints. Take the shield of faith and with it quench all the

fiery darts, doubts, questions, of the enemy. As you exercise faith you will be surprised at the rapid increase of faith with every effort.

BEGIN TO BELIEVE

As we have already stated, one should never wait for some wave of faith to strike him as some strange or special gift from God. "The word is nigh thee, the word of faith which we preach." "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Faith comes with enlightenment from the Word of God. The testimony of all the great men of faith gives evidence that faith is simply believing what God says is truth and acting upon this conviction.

Faith is never an experiment or an effort to try some test to see if it will work. Too many play April fool with God, and try to test His promise in some easy-going slipshod manner. Then talk about trying to take things by faith—dry faith indeed! Such experiments will never work in spiritual things. As faith is a sincere conviction of the heart, all such efforts are in vain. There must be a sincere abandonment of all to the sweet will of God before faith can work in effectual prayer.

Simple faith is always from the heart and always spiritual. Faith is full of life and throbs in activity. It moves men to remove mountains, and holds the heart steady in every trying hour.

O for a living faith so true and bright,
A glowing fire within my breast;
A moving power, ever guiding right,
The weary soul to perfect rest.

O for a living faith that has no fear;
Strong conviction of truth divine;

Always removing doubts with vision clear,
While glories from His presence shine.

With a living faith comes achievement sure;
A faith that brightens every time
The subtle tempter calls or howls the more:
This living faith I'll claim as mine.

O this living faith with its anchor cast
In Christ our Lord within the vail,
Can stand the storm and wind of every blast:
This victorious faith can never fail.

—J. W. G.

CHAPTER XI

PRAYING IN THE HOLY GHOST

"Building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost" (Jude 20).

After we have done all that we can do, every condition met as far as we know, and our faith stretching like a golden wire around the throne; we may rest assured that help has been laid upon one who is mighty. The Holy Spirit pouring through our hearts the spirit of grace and supplication will not leave us alone. We have the promise, the Spirit himself will help our infirmities. The Holy Spirit always fully knows the divine mind, and will enable us to hold steady in our faith, if we will but follow on to know.

THE INNER CHAMBER

It is the Spirit himself who alone can introduce us into the inner chambers of the King. He alone can lift us into these heavenly places where we may come into the presence of the King of kings. Here in these hidden chambers of blessed assurance in the divine presence it may be well for us to remember a few facts:

1. Material or sense consciousness is only temporary and transitory. Hence mere feelings must have nothing to do with the real facts of truth.

2. We may remember spiritual things are all-supreme. God must be first in all our plans and desires. God must be all, over all and through all.

3. Christ has been set forth as the example of our life, but more, He has become the fountain of all our needs. In Him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All we obtain from heaven must come through Christ.

4. In these hours of meditation we must know that Christ has become the real center of our lives. Our lives molded after His thought and will. His will is not only supreme, but our joy. Our life is heavenly, our love is heavenly, our joy is all overflowing with the heavenly, we are in fact in the heavenlies.

5. We should not only recognize our dependence upon God as our Father, but we should cultivate this sense of utter helplessness without His constant presence. Our Lord taught us this great lesson, when He said: "The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do." This modern idea expressed in these words, "know thyself," or "he can who thinks he can," is all wrong. To really know ourselves is to know our weakness without God. We can better do, when "strengthened with all might by his Spirit in the inner man." A constant dependence upon God assures of the power of Christ. "When I am weak then am I strong." Paul even declares that he would glory in his infirmities "that the power of Christ may rest upon me."

6. This brings us to where we should realize our position with Christ in His victories and holy triumphs over sin and death. Sin is awful, but our Christ has the victory, "for in that he died, he died unto sin once, but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God." This victory is ours. "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed

unto sin." We may share with Him His victory over death.

THE BELIEVER'S ASSOCIATION WITH CHRIST

"We are all very human. Material things hold our attention. We are so inclined to judge after the sight of the eye. We move among men with such constant exercise of our material faculties that we are very apt to forget or lose the God-given vision of our deeper relation to the world unseen. Man is not mere body, he is soul and spirit. The purpose of the gospel is to lift man from the baser elements of material existence into the spiritual world and fit him for his eternal existence in holy purity. Being dead in trespasses and sins through his fallen nature, he must be quickened, made alive, to understand spiritual things. Through the death and resurrection of Christ we have a beautiful illustration, and the revelation of the power through the ministry of the Holy Ghost, by which man may be taken out of death and given life, even life from above and association with Christ in His resurrection. "You hath he quickened [made alive] who were dead in trespasses and in sins." God raised our Lord from the dead, "and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named," and "gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body; the fulness of him that filleth all in all." The Church, as the body of Christ in New Testament terminology is placed in the heavenlies.

THE CHURCH IN THE HEAVENLIES

Even when we were dead in sins, He hath quickened us together, "and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." The word "places" is not in the orig-

inal. More properly, "in the heavenlies." "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God." This glorious quickening power, which brings us out of the death of sins by divine regenerating grace, is wonderful; but the eternal purpose of God is to associate us with Christ in the heavenlies, giving us a second lift through the faith and operation of God. "As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." When Christ died, "he died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." First, we are quickened into life from the death of trespasses in order that we may die the death unto sin in the crucifixion with Christ. We are made alive, quickened from the death of trespasses and sins, but the old man, the carnal mind, must die and be crucified that we may be freed from all sin to be thus associated with Christ in the heavenlies, or heavenly places. "If we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection. Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin, for he that is dead is freed from sin." "But now being made free from sin," by the crucifixion of the old man, we have our fruit unto holiness. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." "To the intent that now unto the princi-

palities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed—in Christ Jesus our Lord: in whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him."

Paul, the great apostle, records one of the most wonderful prayers ever offered by mortal man. In this prayer he gathers spiritual forces to strengthen the inner man for the all-glorious indwelling Christ; in order that there may be a firm rooting and grounding of the whole being in love, by opening the understanding "to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God." Here then we have a vision of the Church as seen in the heavenlies. In another picture we have the Church as a temple built upon a firm foundation for a habitation of God through the Spirit. "Your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own." The spiritual heavens are thus opened up for holy communion in Christ, by whom we have access unto the Father through the revelation of spiritual verities contained in the Word of Life.

SEPARATION OR OVERCOMERS

One of the first laws of heavenly things is a spiritual atmosphere untainted with worldliness. The love of the world, worldly ambitions, worldly ideals, human methods, will greatly hinder spiritual achievements. Any leaning to human judgment or to our own ways or understanding will so cloud the vision as to mislead us in our spiritual communion. "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy

ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." We must not only be separate from the world, so that we are no part of its organizations and associations, but be free from its influence and trust, so that there is no affinity of any kind or degree, if we would enjoy the largest possible usefulness in prayer and heavenly activities. We must live in the higher altitudes, above the world and its material laws, in the realm of the supernatural, and give our attention to the things of the Spirit if we are to have victory. "Ye have overcome the world." "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith." "To him that overcometh will I grant to eat of the hidden manna." The world is beneath our feet, and material senses are secondary, while we mind the things of the Spirit.

"To be carnally minded is death"—death to spiritual growth; death to achieving faith; death to prayer life. On the other hand, "to be spiritually minded is life:" life to faith, prayer, and spiritual progress; even life and peace.

A worldly centered life is weakness. This world, with its losses and pleasures, its ambitions, and shortsightedness, has strange connecting wires that ground spiritual currents of power and victory. "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." It could not remain, for world-love destroys all divine connection. Hence victory over the world is essential if we are to have power in His presence.

THE HOLY SPIRIT OUR HELPER

In this material existence we are often bothered with mortal sense. "We know not what to pray for as we ought." Material sense and human thinking get in our

way, but must be overcome. Here we have the promise of the Spirit to help us: "Likewise the Spirit helpeth our infirmities." Though living with Christ in the spiritual heavenlies of His divine presence, yet we have mortal infirmities. How often we need help in our communion with the Infinite. Thank God, here we have it.

1. The Spirit helpeth our shortsightedness. "We know not what to pray for," as we ought. When we are unable to know the divine will through the Word, if in all sincerity we seek to know we may rest assured, as we tread softly in His presence, that the Spirit will help us, as we silently cry, "Lord, please help me."

2. He will help by enlightening our darkened intellects so we may have a better understanding of the promise revealed in His Word. How the Spirit flashes light on some portion of the Word until it stands out in golden letters of light!

3. He helpeth our infirmities by quickening our sluggish desires into flaming passion to obtain the fulfillment of the promise.

4. He also helpeth our infirmities in meeting the conditions for answered prayer. To many it seems almost impossible to meet known conditions. How kindly the Spirit helps and urges on in the struggle until the battle is victoriously fought.

5. He helpeth our infirmities in concentration. In our weakness the mind is likely to wander. We are troubled to hold our thoughts steady and in a fixed direction. The Spirit will help to bring the eye of faith to a single point. "If thine eye be single thy whole body shall be filled with light." How gracious the divine provision! Our Lord gave us the promise, "When he, the Spirit of

truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth." The tender Spirit gently directs our attention and then assists us in holding steady, patiently waiting until more light is given from the Word, or in some flash of truth by inspiration in harmony with the revealed Word.

6. The Spirit helps to clear our vision, "He will take the things of mine and show them unto you." How many precious truths lie hidden in some text of Scripture until the Holy Spirit flashes light upon the Word. Then in golden letters it bursts forth in beautiful reality. The heart beams with flashing truth, and faith lays hold upon the promise.

7. He will quicken our memory. How forgetful we are, and often it is hard to call to memory needed points of helpful Scripture. He will "bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." How kindly He assists our memory for we would forget and many things would lie hidden and would be forgotten, were it not for His tender power which calls up in our consciousness some truth or burning text of Scripture. Sometimes like the disciples we seem to be slow of heart to believe until the Holy Spirit flashes into our mind, "Thus it is written by the prophets."

By the help of the Holy Spirit we are able to pray according to the will of God, for "He that searcheth the heart, knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God."

INTERCESSION OF THE SPIRIT

"I will pour upon you" from on high "the spirit of grace and of supplications." "Praying always with all

prayer and supplication in the Spirit." "The Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." There is an inward, impelling cry of the soul in the Church for the fulfillment of God's promise by the divine Spirit. There is an inward travail of soul with unutterable groanings, an inward urgency of need, for the progress of salvation among men; a strong and heavenly burden crushing out the fervent and effectual prayer, which brings blessed results in the building of God's kingdom.

This kind of praying is almost a lost art in the modern church, but it was fully known and practiced among early believers, and it burst forth in all spiritual movements. Paul urged those who received the gospel to hold steady in their prayer to God, "Striving together with me in your prayers to God for me," for the carrying forward of the work and the opening of effectual doors.

The Holy Spirit, our blessed Comforter, is always ready to help our infirmities. He is ready to pray in us what will be pleasing in the will of God for us. The Spirit is one with the Son and the Father and he knows. "What man knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of man which is in him?" so no man knoweth the things of God but by the Spirit of God, therefore he is able to make "intercession for the saints according to the will of God." Christ, our intercessor at the right hand of the Father intercedes above, while the Holy Spirit intercedes in the saints on earth. This places the Church in the heavenlies and closely associated with the Christ, so there is complete harmony. Thus the Church in the heavenly atmosphere of divine presence has opened up to her infinite possibilities in prayer and faith for the accomplishment

of God's purpose in the earth. One need not be great or known in society or among men, or have marked gifts in language and oratory, to attain unto mighty power in prevailing prayer. All that is needed is devotion and oneness with Christ in the heavenlies. With this glorious oneness the Spirit moves and intercedes in the praying Church, now united with Christ in the world's redemption.

PRAYING IN THE HOLY GHOST

"Building up yourselves, . . . praying in the Holy Ghost." Only while we are living in conscious communion with God, may we hope to attain unto this most glorious possibility, "praying in the Holy Ghost." Praying in the Holy Ghost must comprehend praying in harmony with God's Word, praying in harmony with God's will, and praying in faith. Moreover, this harmony must comprehend the love of God. The heart must be melted and moved and filled with holy passion, the whole being kept in the love of God. There can be nothing in the heart like carnality, or even the spirit of resentment, or lack of a spirit of forgiveness if the praying is to have wings of faith to reach the throne. The heavens must be clear with the conscious realization of the presence of God, and that unmistakable grip on the Word of God in faith believing, if there is much praying in the Spirit.

LAWS OF GROWTH

There are laws of growth or development in reaching out into the realm of faith. "Building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost." Praying is a great soul builder, and the most helpful exercise in the development of faith. In reading the life of George Mueller one must be impressed with the fact that there was a growth, a steady development of his faith. He first

began to believe for small amounts, and then for larger sums, until he could believe for thousands and even millions. Upon his tombstone is inscribed the following:

"He trusted in God with whom
'Nothing shall be impossible,'
And in His beloved Son, Jesus Christ our Lord,
Who said, 'I go unto My Father,
And whatsoever ye shall ask in My Name
That will I do that the Father
May be glorified in the Son,' and in His inspired Word
which declares that
'All things are possible to him that believeth.'
And God fulfilled these declarations
in the experience of His servant by enabling
him to provide and care for about
Ten Thousand Orphans"

It was said of him, "George Mueller cultivated faith." He gives a brief outline of the steps in his book on "The Life of Trust." You ask, "How may I, a true believer, have my faith strengthened?" The answer is this:

I. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above" (Jas. 1:17). As the increase of faith is a good gift it must come from God, and therefore He ought to be asked for this blessing.

II. The following means, however, ought to be used:

1. The careful reading of the Word of God, combined with meditation on it.

2. As, with reference to the growth of every grace of the Spirit, it is of the utmost importance that we seek to maintain an upright heart and a good conscience, and therefore do not knowingly and habitually indulge in those things which are contrary to the mind of God, so it

is also particularly the case with reference to the growth of faith.

3. If we, indeed, desire our faith to be strengthened, we should not shrink from opportunities where our faith may be tried, and therefore, through the trial, be strengthened.

4. The last important point for the strengthening of our faith is that we let God work for us when our trial of faith comes, and do not work a deliverance of our own.

In this practical age of art and science much time has been given to mechanical laws and material science. "We are strong at some of the weaker points of human power, but we are weaker at the point of greatest possible power." Men have spent sleepless nights, toiled early and late, even lost their health in research and struggle to gather facts and compare results in physical law to discover the relation between cause and phenomena. The world has put the Church to shame in its efforts. If the Church *should* awaken to the possibilities of faith, what might not be accomplished? Infinite Goodness still waits for the Church to arise in the power of prayer and claim her rightful place in the world of forces.

"Father, I stretch my hands to Thee,
No other help I know:
If thou withdraw Thyself from me,
Ah! whither shall I go?"

"Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove,
With all Thy quick'ning powers;
Kindle a flame of sacred love
In these cold hearts of ours."

"Come, Holy Spirit, from above,
With Thy celestial fire;
Come, and with flames of zeal and love
Our hearts and tongues inspire."

"The things of Christ the Spirit takes,
And to our hearts reveals;
Our bodies He a temple makes,
And our redemption seals."

CHAPTER XII

PRAYER AND FAITH FOR DIVINE HEALING

"He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you" (Romans 8:11).

There has been a marked change in the attitude of Christian people in all circles regarding the matter of physical healing. Not many years ago the question was looked upon with strange fear, and much doubt was current even among the so-called spiritual people. Some were even led to denounce the effort as fanaticism. But a marked change has come over the religious world, and many are now able to exercise faith for healing; and services given to the question of bodily healing are no longer uncommon among many of our evangelical denominations. Without doubt there have been many extremes and erroneous ideas, and no little fanaticism in the development of universal faith for divine healing. Very naturally criticism and opposition would drive many to extreme methods, all of which have no place in the scriptural methods and teachings in the precious prayer of faith which encompasses the healing of the body.

NOTHING NEW

The revelation of God's willingness to heal the body of sickness is not new or modern. It is as old as the faith of Abraham. It was through the prayer and faith of Abraham that the whole household of Abimelech was

healed by divine power. This faith for healing, based upon the promise of God, seems to have been fundamental in the life and history of Abraham's descendants. Very early in their deliverance from Egypt God declared, "I am the Lord that healeth thee" (Exod. 15:26). This statement followed one of the most remarkable promises ever given to any people. Grounded upon obedience to His voice, right doing, and keeping of His commandments, the promise runs: "I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians." Then in the final statement of Moses as given in Deut. 7:15, we have this promise: "And the Lord will take away from thee all sickness." The special manifestation of divine favor is clearly revealed in Psalm 105:37. When God brought them forth from Egyptian servitude, it is stated, "And there was not a feeble person among their tribes." This is most remarkable that among two and a half million people, old and young, men and women, under such extreme hardships as they endured, that there should not be one feeble person in all their families. Is not this ground to expect larger things from the good hand of our God under the revelation of the gospel, and especially with all modern advancements in medical science and known causes for healing? Why so much sickness in all modern civilization? May we not reflect back to the question of right conditions, or rather to careless living, eating, drinking, breathing, and careless clothing?

THE MINISTRY OF CHRIST

Our Lord not only preached repentance and the gospel of the kingdom of God (which compassed the "new birth" to such as Nicodemus) and the blessing of sanctification to His own followers; but went about doing

good "and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people." And, moreover, He healed all that came to Him of whatsoever disease they had. As an explanation of His ministry of healing and to give a scriptural foundation, reference is made to the atonement chapter, Isaiah 53, verses four and five. "He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows . . . and by his stripes we are healed." This gracious ministry of healing was given also to His preachers, whom He sent forth to preach, saying, "Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give." This ministry was continued in the Church, as given in the record of the Acts: "And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; . . . insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them." The directions as given by James would indicate the practice in the early church: "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick" (James 5:14, 15).

FAITH FOR HEALING

The ministry of our Lord and the many recorded miracles of healing and the clear statement of His willingness to heal all who came to Him, the many cases of healing as recorded in the ministry of the apostles, together with the directions as given by James, should be sufficient ground for our faith in the exercise of prayer for divine healing. If faith seems small, do not become discouraged. Exercise what faith you have and it will

soon grow into larger proportions. Be patient, and you will soon be able to believe, not only for yourself, but for others as well. If we recognize doubts, doubts will grow, but if we will but resist the devil and doubts—for the devil and doubts go together—both will flee, and we shall be able to believe the promised word of healing. There is an inspirational faith, a God-given faith, for special occasions, but faith for healing is not necessarily some special or mighty manifestation of supernatural faith. In fact, faith for healing is very simple, and not unlike the faith that saves or by which we are sanctified. All simple faith is taking God at His Word and believing that He means just what He says in His Book of Truth. The Holy Spirit may flash some word of promise across our mind to quicken or strengthen faith, but the last act must come from the heart in full acceptance of God's faithful Word. In other words, "Have faith in God."

FOUR KINDS OF HEALING

In taking up the question of bodily healing it may be well to call attention to the four kinds of healing, well known to all in the world of science.

1. Medicinal Healing. Without question, much has been gained in the world of science in medicinal healing, and we are far away from the whims and fancies of the medical profession of past years. Diseases have been checked and many diseases are much more easily controlled. Our hospitals are a great blessing to society, and they offer an unlimited opportunity to the sick and suffering where health and comfort may be obtained. Thanks to science and the medical world for what has been accomplished in the last years by their heroic and untiring efforts to assist nature in the cure of disease. There

should be no conflict between medical science and the prayer of faith for the healing of the body. It must be clear to all that medical science is limited to the removal of the cause of the disease, or in some degree to assist nature in overcoming the disease. Drugs and opiates cannot cure. Medicinal aid may retard disease, give nature a better chance to throw off unhealthy conditions, give strength and opportunity to overcome weakness, give natural forces better conditions to throw off disease, or, in other words, help life to overcome death. In any event, it is very evident that life forces must be the secret of healing and strength.

2. Mental or metaphysical healing. It will not be questioned by many that there is some benefit gained in "suggestive healing," or the action of the mind-power over the body. Even in the practice of medicine much is gained if the patient can be kept cheerful and full of hope and full of faith in his recovery. I have heard medical doctors declare that their patient might have gotten well if he had not submitted to the idea that he must die, and die he did. Mental healing would not be so bad if the method were properly used and not commercialized under fanciful names and practiced through hypocrisy. When these "theorists" take on the name "science" or "Christian," or other high sounding names to attract and form a system of healing as opposed to medical science or the Scriptural method of healing, and commercialize their profession, I am reminded of Simon Magus of the eighth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, or those priests of the nineteenth chapter. Every encouragement should be given the sick by word, suggestion or kind deeds, but this free, God-given possibility must never be commercialized.

3. There is healing by natural means. Or, in other words, healing by right living. That is, correct eating, right clothing, and proper exercise of the bodily functions. Very many now seeking health at health resorts by medical care, or through faith for healing, would be greatly benefited by giving more time to the study of hygiene, the study of health and the laws of sanitation. Much time might be saved and used in praying for others, if we were all more careful as to what and how we eat, and where we sleep; and then properly used the bathtub, toothbrush and throat gargle, and observed the laws of proper exercise. It is remarkable how careless nearly everyone seems to be of his body—the very temple of the Holy Spirit—until he gets sick or filled with pain. Then how quickly he flees to the dear Lord for help. Yet how patiently He deals with our ignorance, and kindly comes to our rescue with His healing grace.

4. There is healing by divine power. This is what might be called "spiritual healing," healing by the Spirit and power of divine presence, or supernatural healing. This ministry of healing our Lord exercised as evidence of His deity, and sent forth His workers with this very same power. They exercised this power through faith in His name; the commission has never been changed, but continued through the centuries until the present. Thank God, there is a much wider manifestation of this power and presence among believers, and will increase until the very end. Of course there will be much deception along this line, and the Enemy will try to turn many away from the truth of holiness of heart and life through some seeming manifestation of miracle working power. It will not be hard, however, to distinguish the false from the true.

The elect will not be deceived, although they will be tried to the very limit, for if possible the Devil would deceive the very elect. The elect can never be deceived, for they have the heavenly password, "holiness of heart and life." Their eyes have been opened so they can discover the difference between the evil and the good; "by their fruits ye shall know them." Nothing becomes attractive to those who have been cleansed from all sin by inward and outward holiness—in other words, "perfecting holiness in the fear of God." Thus they are and shall be protected from all seeming manifestations of miracle working power without the fruits of the Spirit: "love, joy, peace," and "true holiness."

SICKNESS NOT SINFUL

Sin originated in the enemy of man, the devil himself, then it was found in man. We read that death came by sin and so death has passed upon all men for all are in the line of transgression. Thus sin is the primary cause of all sickness and death. Sickness is a form of gradual dying and a forewarner of coming death. While sin is the original or primary cause of sickness and death, yet there can be no personal obligation, as we are all under the curse. There is no sin in sickness unless sickness has been brought on by our sin, and even then the responsibility is rather on the sin than on the sickness which followed.

Sin is an awful disease of the soul and often produces bad effects in the body. And we read that the "bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days." Scientists tell us that bad emotions strangely affect the bodily functions. Anger inflames the nerves, poisons the blood and destroys the tissues. Jealousy excites the action of the heart and hinders the purification of the blood.

Hatred is a sordid destroyer of mental power, beclouds the mind and incites to strange imaginations. The body may seem strong, and one may seem to be healthy, and yet there is no vital force to throw off disease when once it fastens its fangs in the flesh. While there are many seeming exceptions, and some evil men live to an old age, yet the rule still applies; sin is destructive after all. If the effects are not seen in the body they are often in evidence in the mind, and always in the spiritual nature.

There may be no special responsibility for sickness, from the fact that it may be caused from emotions which are not sinful in themselves, such as fear, grief, overjoy, or excitement. Or sickness may be occasioned by conditions of the climate, sudden changes, foul atmosphere, or contagion. We read that "Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he died." Here was a great man of marked power, who had exercised faith for the healing of others, and yet was sick himself and died of this sickness. Paul left Trophimus at Miletus sick. This gives evidence that there was no sin in the sickness and no special weakness on Paul's part that his devoted brother in the Lord was not healed. Paul advised Timothy to take special nourishment for his stomach and often infirmities. We may conclude that there are many other reasons for sickness than sin, and some for which we are not responsible.

DIVINE HEALING AND THE ATONEMENT

While the word *atonement* occurs only once in the New Testament, yet the sacrifice of Christ is the great theme of the epistles of Paul. Christ was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, and through this vicarious offering or sacrifice we now have reconciliation with God and full atonement. The atonement must be as

complete as the transgression, and we are assured of this fact: "My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." The atonement, the sacrifice of Christ, is the ground of our redemption. Redemption covers justification, and sanctification, and also "the redemption of the body." The full redemption of the body will not take place until the resurrection, but the overflow blessings of the atonement provide for the quickening of our mortal body in this life. "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." Then we must remember that the inspired writer grounded his reason for the ministry of healing through Christ on the atonement chapter of Isaiah: "Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses" (Matt. 8:17). In this he referred to Isaiah 53:4, 5. Sickness as well as sin is included by Peter in the sacrificial offering of our Lord. "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, . . . by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Peter 2:24). One of the causes why so many remained weak and sickly in the Corinthian church was because they had not included this great blessing of healing in their vision of the sacrificial body of the Christ: "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you." Why, for what cause? the previous statement gives the reason: "Not discerning the Lord's body." What body was this? Most surely it was His sacrificial body, of which the Lord's supper was to be a constant reminder. "As oft as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come." Eating and drinking unworthily is failing to see and know that in the sacrificial offering of

Christ we have redemption from our sins. The reason why so many are content to remain sick is because they have not clearly seen the provision for their healing in the sacrificial body of our Lord. It is a mighty ground for faith when one can see in Christ on the tree a full and overflow provision for his healing: "By whose stripes we are healed."

CAN EVERYONE BE HEALED?

The provision is full and overflowing. The condition is faith. "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." Wherefore didst thou doubt? is the reason Christ gave for the failure of His disciples. "The prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up." We shall not try to explain why many are not healed. We know the provision has been made in Christ, and we know what God has provided for us He surely must be willing to bestow. The causes of failure and the reasons why, may be very many. As divine healing is personal, and received on the ground of personal faith, the causes must be as varied and different as the individualities involved. Hence no set rule can be stated. The cause may be a failure to meet conditions—right heart conditions. It may be a failure to exercise faith. Or it may be a failure to continue in faith, and hold steadily at the believing point in our praying. Or it may be the crossing of our prayers or the crossing of other people's prayers in the healing desired. That is, if this particular healing was granted it would be out of harmony with conditions which must obtain in the answer to others' prayers. Our confidence must comprehend the perfection of God, and He has revealed that "No good

thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." We must finally rest in the perfect goodness of God. But all this should not circumscribe our asking or our faith for healing, which is provided for all who believe. The need of the hour is more faith, greater faith, even a living faith to claim all the God-given promises for body, soul and spirit.

CHAPTER XIII

GATHERED FACTS AND TESTIMONY TO HEALING

"I am the Lord that healeth thee" (Exodus 15:26).

It may be well for us to gather a few facts which have been covered just at this point of faith for healing.

(a) We have seen that it is not in the divine purpose to destroy any law, but one law may be overcome by another law which supersedes its force or strength.

(b) Faith is as natural to all as eyesight. There is a difference between the faith faculty and the faith which brings victory. It is one thing to have sight faculty, the eye, and quite another thing to really see.

(c) Prayer is as truly made up of right conditions as a request, or sincere desire.

(d) Methods of healing are various, and must not be confounded with divine healing. God often works through means to accomplish His purposes. He is also able to overcome any natural law by higher laws in the spiritual world.

(e) Divine healing is clearly provided in the sacrificial offering of Christ.

(f) Divine healing is a gift and is offered to us in the ministry of the Holy Spirit. No one can practice healing as a profession. No one has the art of divine healing, or a special ability as a talent in the gift of healing. Faith may be developed and one may grow in spir-

itual favor, but all is dependent upon vital union with Christ.

(g) There is no effort on our part, no concentration of will or purpose, not even fasting or prayer or humiliation through sacrifice, which will guarantee the Lord's doing as we ask. We may ask, but all depends upon His love and mercy and infinite wisdom.

(h) Healing is not a material force but a superpower, a spiritual touch and adjustment, which sets the right forces to work in the accomplishment of right conditions in the body for healing and health.

(i) The laws of prayer and faith, as set forth in the previous chapters, must be carefully observed. The laws of His presence and power must not be overlooked. The realization of His all-glorious presence, here and now, able and willing, with superabundance of life and healing virtue, even healing now, will greatly assist us in reaching forth for the healing touch.

ENCOURAGEMENT TO FAITH

Every effort should be made to encourage faith in ourselves and in others. And strong effort should always be put forth to dispel doubt and fear. We must never question the power and willingness of God to do for us "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think." But we must never forget that this power is always according to the "power that worketh in us." God is never straitened in Himself, He is never limited in power or wisdom and ability to do for us what needs to be done. The supply is all-sufficient. All limitations rest in our own selves or in the conditions and limitations of our surroundings.

Holding steady on some God-given promise, and

rejecting all symptoms which seem to abide, and then still moving out in determined faith, will sometimes bring relief and healing. The uniting of another's faith or some word of power from another's lips will often help faith over the hilltop to certain victory. The ancient custom of laying on of hands is often helpful. However this must be practiced with every caution not to attract the attention of the mind from the spiritual to the material, and cause the seeker to think that healing is from the hands. It must always be "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk," or, "the Lord Jesus maketh thee whole, rise, walk in Jesus' name." We must ever recognize, and insist that others also recognize, as did the great apostle Paul in Acts 14:15, that all healing power is not of human touch, it must be the divine hand of holy power. Human curiosity (and the devil himself) has always been anxious to crown mere man with some supernatural power, like the priests in the story of Acts 14, when the people would even have worshiped Paul and Barnabas for the healing of one man. If we would retain divine favor, like Paul we must reject all this, and explain that we are still men of like passions and have no healing power in ourselves. This self-glorification will always destroy real faith and result in terrible disaster. Humility must always be one of the abiding channels for real faith.

NATURAL MEANS AND HEALING

We are aware that some who exercise faith for healing are much opposed to the use of any human means for the health of the body. We fear that some have followed their own willfulness rather than faith in God. Since writing the foregoing chapters a large book written by Newton R. Riddell, entitled "Vital Christianity," has

come into my hands. While I have not been able yet to read the entire book and gain the author's position on all the important questions discussed in this important treatise (having read only the two chapters on "The Ministry of Healing" and "Pneumatherapy"), I must take the liberty to quote the author's own words at this point. Dr. Riddell has been almost universally received as a deeply spiritual man, full of faith for healing. He says on page 282:

"We may call a physician, receive or administer any remedy or form of treatment that has proven meritorious, without violating spiritual law. We may serve God by hygienic living, by destroying poisons and disease germs, correcting anatomical anomalies, and in various ways promoting the right conditions for the expression of the vital principle. But natural means of healing produce natural effects only; while spiritual healing, accompanied by forgiveness of sins, changes constitutional soul qualities, and thereby causes the formation of pure rather than perverse flesh. The continual manifestation of spiritual life in a spiritualized soul and body makes one practically immune to disease from any cause, but especially so from diseases that result from personal sin. This fact is highly significant, and is sufficient reason for continually accepting the divine life for vitality, even when there is no apparent weakness or disease.

"The one means demanded of God for the accomplishment of our healing is *faith*. But if additional means are expedient, they should be used. By refusing to do so, one may become responsible for thwarting God's purposes. A few years ago a strong, middle-aged woman was stricken with severe cramps from intestinal obstruction.

The sect to which she belonged considered it wrong to employ any natural means of healing. Each day the elders of the church came and prayed, anointing her with oil in the name of the Lord. When neighbors suggested a remedy, the elders opposed, saying that should it prove effective God would not get the glory. After eighteen days of intense agony the sufferer died, leaving two motherless babes. This form of religious fanaticism has greatly hindered the Lord's ministry of healing. Unfortunately, fanatical adherence to a given system is not limited to one sect: metaphysicians have slain their thousands, and medical and mechanical physicians their tens of thousands, by refusing to employ other agencies than those prescribed by their creeds."

HEALING RECEIVED

In receiving divine healing we must not forget the spiritual laws which govern in prayer and the vital laws of faith. In speaking along the line of healing under what he terms Pneumatherapy, Dr. Riddell says in "Vital Christianity," on page 289:

"The branch of Pneumatherapy that relates to bodily healing through the realization of our inheritance in Christ Jesus rests on the following facts:

"(a) The fact that Christ's vicarious atonement accomplishes the redemption, and makes possible the restoration and spiritualization of man's whole nature, spirit, soul and body, which atonement is made effective in a believer by the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

"(b) The fact that Christ indwells the members of His body by the Holy Spirit, and is ever seeking to express His perfect life and substance in them.

"(c) The fact that to the degree that Christ comes

into physical expression is strength and wholeness realized in bodily functions.

"(d) The fact that the Holy Spirit unites with the regenerate human spirit in vitalizing soul and body, thereby making it possible to receive and appropriate divine life for health, strength and healing.

"(e) The fact that the Spirit's word-of-power constitutes an adaptable and effective means of casting out sickness and inwrought sin, and of receiving the spiritual life and its qualities specifically in any part or function.

"(f) The fact that every child of God is vitally related to Christ Jesus, and is, by virtue of the new inheritance, entitled to share all the riches of grace, including health and strength, to the end that Christ may be glorified and His kingdom extended on the earth.

"(g) The fact that the foregoing propositions are experimentally demonstrable by any regenerate person complying with the necessary conditions for working with the Holy Spirit in spiritualizing the body."

EXPERIENCE OF HEALING

Some years ago a preacher who had believed for years in the power of God to heal was suddenly attacked with a strange malignant infection of the inner ear. He was away from home, much overworked, lecturing several times each day and holding evangelistic services at night; then compelled to ride fifteen miles after preaching in the evening, it was not strange that he took a sudden cold. The pain in the inner ear became intense. Being examined by a specialist, he was ordered to the hospital. The idea of a few weeks in the hospital did not sound very encouraging, and so he hastened home. It took three days to make the trip. The conditions were so severe that he

was ordered to make several stops for treatment along the three days' trip to his home. He was constantly praying for healing. On his arrival at home another specialist was called, and both ears were lanced. It seemed that God must heal him. He cried, prayed, waited, but no healing came. Nothing could be done except to keep the openings clear for the discharge, and proper bathing or cleansing. Having been in the pulpit for over twenty-six years without missing a Sabbath, it seemed hard to be shut away with constant pain every conscious moment. When in prayer, God seemed to speak to him saying, "You will get on better if you will be still and keep quiet." He replied, "Very well, Lord, if that is what you want," and went to bed. Several weeks passed, and there was no improvement. The physician became fearful of a mastoid operation, and the indications were pointing in that direction. One afternoon a preacher friend came to call for a moment's visit. In prayer that afternoon, in his characteristic manner of prayer, he exclaimed, "Why, Lord, when you passed by that fig tree and spoke the word, the fig tree was withered at the roots. Wither the malignant condition of this inner ear trouble of my friend and yours, and do it now." Instantly the suffering preacher grasped this word with eager faith, "withered at the roots." The pain still lingered, but he held on with fingers of steel. "I am healed, it is withered at the roots." In a few hours he fell asleep. When he awoke the pain was gone. The next morning the symptoms were much worse, and more fear from the family and the doctor were in evidence. But he firmly declared, "The Lord has touched me and has withered this condition at the roots." Several times through the

day the physician called over the phone, fearing immediate danger. In reply to the question of the wife, "What shall I say, dear," he would declare, "Tell him I am better." In forty-eight hours the physician pronounced him well and able to make another trip to fill other engagements. This man has ever believed that victory was gained from steady faith in the word of Christ, which seemed to him a word of promise from Christ. And how quickly it withered away. Multitudes could testify to this same great truth that "according to your faith," simple declarative faith, healing has been realized, or done unto them.

THE VITALIZING CHRIST

The all-consuming truth and fact of the New Testament is the baptism of believers with the Holy Spirit into the one body, the living, vitalized Church, which is the body of Christ, "his body, the fullness of him which filleth all in all." Christ is the vitalizing center of our life, "In him was life and the life was the light of men." "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." "I am that bread of life, he that eateth me shall live by me." "When Christ who is our life shall appear." This life is the result of vital union with our Lord. "I am the vine, ye are the branches." Without question spiritual life is clearly comprehended in these texts, and our union with Christ is vitally a spiritual union, nevertheless the indwelling Christ with His life flowing through our spiritual natures has a reflex blessing through our entire being. As the body is vitalized by the spirit, and we live and have our being in God; when our spirit has been quickened and the whole being filled with the pure light of divine life, the human spirit thus vital-

ized may become a channel for strength and life in the body. "For if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal body by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." Christ then becomes, in the truest sense, life for spirit, soul and body.

This union with the divine is most vital. We have no life apart from Christ. He is the fountain of all life. Our Lord in His earthly ministry so fully realized the importance of this great truth that He emphasized His union with the Father as the secret of His life and power. "I and my Father are one." "I can do nothing without my Father." "My Father, which dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." Even Isaiah, in his noted prophecy of the Messiah, caught the vision (Isaiah 11:3): "He shall be of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord." This should be more properly rendered, "He shall draw his breath in the fear of the Lord." Our Lord had this constant realization of a vital union, even drawing His breath in blessed consciousness of the Father's presence and indwelling life.

In this conscious realization of the indwelling Christ we may recognize the supremacy of Spirit life. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing." How hard and difficult it is to believe that, when the bodily pains shoot through our flesh, and bodily weakness seems to hold us in its firm grasp like an iron vise which refuses to let go! Yet we should believe His Word, "For the words which I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." That is, they are spiritual and life giving. We shall find great help in faith for healing if we refuse to recognize our fleshly body as our real self, and fully

accept the words of our Lord, "The flesh profiteth nothing." We may also be greatly strengthened by insisting that the "Spirit is life because of righteousness." Then in constant realization we should draw from Him life, strength and healing.

"Moment by moment I'm kept in His love,
Moment by moment I've life from above.
Living with Jesus this new life divine,
Moment by moment His glory doth shine."

CONCLUDING WORD

Whatever our prejudice may have been, or whatever branch of teaching we have learned, what a field of service for poor, suffering humanity is now opened to the Church of God in this special line of Christian activity through the ministry of healing! Had the Church maintained vital faith in the living Christ, ever present, ever ready, and ever able to heal, she would have been saved much trouble, and many false doctrines would have found no root in human thinking. We may rejoice however that there is a growing faith among spiritual people everywhere, and there is also an eager response to the word of faith for the healing of the sick. And above all many are now able to exercise faith through prayer, while the Lord has saved many of our sick from death, for He has raised them up from disease and sickness.

While there may be some failures and often many discouraging cases, nevertheless the eternal facts are the same: Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever."

God is ever present and now ready.

The provisions in the atonement are fully adequate.

The Holy Spirit is now outpoured in active ministry. Spiritual life is above all natural laws.

Faith is now possible in the revelation of divine promise. The needs on every hand are always very great. The poor, as well as the suffering, are with us always. We can minister to them whensoever we will. Christ is made known in tender compassion over earth's suffering millions. Oh for a vital touch of the living Christ in flowing passion to serve.

"She only touched the hem of His garment,
As to His side she stole,
Amid the crowd that gathered around Him,
And straightway she was whole.

"She came in fear and trembling before Him—
She knew her Lord had come;
She felt that from Him virtue had healed her;
The mighty deed was done.

"He turned with, 'Daughter, be of good comfort,
Thy faith hath made thee whole;'
And peace that passeth all understanding,
With gladness filled her soul."

—Geo. F. Root.

CHAPTER XIV

THE POSSIBILITIES OF THE PRAYER LIFE

"Greater works than these shall ye do; because I go unto my Father" (John 14:12).

From these words of our Lord it must be clear to all that He expected by His advent to the Father through His sacrifice and death to open up a fountain of possibilities of spiritual power and blessing which should far surpass anything His disciples had yet witnessed. Not greater in material miracles, such as walking the rolling sea, or stilling the storm-tossed waves, or feeding the hungry multitude. What could be greater than healing the sick and raising the dead? Nothing other than the manifestation of mightier spiritual forces which had been locked up for the ages, but now manifested in these last days and revealed unto the saints, "which is Christ in you the hope of glory." The outpouring of the divine Spirit opened to the Church spiritual possibilities in experience and gifts, and in the application of spiritual forces which would bring to pass greater manifestations in carrying forward the work of redemption.

SLOW TO BELIEVE

How slow the church has been in applying spiritual forces like faith, love and prayer. How careless she has been in clearly emphasizing the conditions of repentance, confession, restitution, and full surrender of the rebellious heart as the prerequisites for faith and trust in the aton-

ing grace. What disregard by her ministry of the important conditions needful in the development of true Christianity. Spiritual forces must have right conditions the same as material forces. How often the conditions of full devotement of the will to all the sweet will of God in full consecration have been disregarded! The cross has been lifted, but solely for the Christ. The Church has shunned the cross in an effort to reach the Pentecost of power. But no fire falls on such an altar; it is much like the altar of Baal.

The divine order is first the cross, then the crown. Crucifixion—death, then the resurrection. Calvary, then Pentecost. Death to sin (crucifixion of the old man), then power for service, or in other words: first purity, then power. Right conditions, then results. Faith will not work without true repentance. Faith will not work for sanctification without full consecration. Faith will not work in prayer without loyalty to Christ and to His name and nature. Faith will not work in a human heart where hatred, envy, jealousy abide. In the application of spiritual laws we must never disregard right spiritual conditions.

SPIRITUAL POWER DEMONSTRATED

Spiritual forces can be demonstrated in this natural world. There are material laws which are being demonstrated every day by carefully observing necessary conditions. There are many laws in physics, metaphysics, auto-suggestion, mental telepathy, which can be demonstrated and are being demonstrated every day. In the physical, if one eats certain kinds of food or takes certain drugs the results can be determined. Mental actions, attitudes and relationships produce results according to

the laws of psychology and personal magnetism. Various cults have arisen professing great things, but largely working only in the realm of metaphysics: psychology, auto-suggestion or personal magnetism. These laws should not be bad in themselves, but may be used in the wrong direction, just as the laws of light, heat and gravitation may be used for destruction.

To obtain spiritual results in building holy character we must get beyond the surface laws of mental action to the life center, the Holy Spirit. He is the life center, the Paraclete, the Comforter, the representative of Christ, the all-filling and light radiating center in spiritual experience. He is called holy for His primary mission and purpose is to apply the atoning blood of Christ in forgiveness and imparting new life to the soul; and then in His all-cleansing radiation of light He is able to purge the old nature of all sin and establish the whole being in holiness.

The laws of spiritual experience can be demonstrated. Observe the conditions of heart repentance, full confession of sin and forsaking all known evil, with one look of faith at the cross; and like flashing lightning one may know the reality of the new birth as taught by Christ. It is also true in the beautiful experience of heart cleansing. Observe the condition of full consecration in the devoted heart purpose to all the will of God, then with an eye of faith centered in the face of Jesus Christ, we may know the joy of a clean heart filled with perfect love. "We all, with open face beholding the glory of the Lord are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

With the spiritual laws of life, light, love and faith,

we may enter the throne-life of prayer in holy communion and intercession. Here the believer may have power with God and with man. "Greater works than these shall ye do because I go unto the Father."

MORE ABOUT PRAYER

The prayer life of our Lord forces all to conclude that prayer, holy communion, spiritual harmony with the divine, is the mightiest force in this world. The Church may enter the throne-room of power and exercise faith, faith that moves obstacles, though mountain-like in their challenge of immovable resistance. Faith with its giant-like arms of strength, clothed with its weapons of warfare that are mighty through God to the pulling down of the strongholds of the enemy—faith overcomes material forces. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith." Faith by its strong persuasive gravity, holds and draws all to one common center, even Christ.

We are urged, commanded, and encouraged to pray: "Men ought always to pray and not to faint." "Pray everywhere." "Pray without ceasing." Prayer is the very breath of holy living. Morning, noon and night, over every meal, and always before placing our head on the pillow for sleep, we should pray. We should form habits of daily devotion, constant communion, continuous recognition of our dependence upon the divine; then exercise immediate consciousness of divine presence over all, in all, through all and filling all, ever infinite, eternal and abiding. With a clean heart filled with perfect love, the way will be made easy.

In this connection we must not forget that prayer requires effort, "a striving together," "Wrestling against spiritual wickedness in high places," "A seeking,"

"knocking," a labor which "worketh in us mightily."

As we have proceeded we have learned that prayer must be definite. Here is where many fail to obtain results. Our desires are scattered. The mind wanders. The heart is unsteady. There is no holding firmly to a given promise. Our Lord tried to impress this in many ways. "Whatsoever ye ask." That is, let your asking be centered upon some one thing. "If thine eye be single"—just one object in view. "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" Name your desire. Then hold steadily to that one thing. "One thing have I desired of the Lord."

Much time and effort are often lost in the prayer room by allowing the worshipers to scatter their desires with no concentrated faith and meditation. It would be much better to wait, wait in faith for some one object, hold the heart and mind steadily to just one thing in unity of purpose. The avenues of our attention and mental activities must be opened in order that the Spirit may be able to flash His presence over all. Faith must be exercised with aggressive moving forward on the authority of God's Word. Spiritual facts must harmonize and work together to obtain spiritual results. If pastors would unite their people in prayer and faith circles, and study spiritual laws and exercise concentration with constant and persistent effort, results in the salvation of the people would be most glorious.

PRAYING FOR THE SICK

If any are sick among you, let them pray. What better direction could be given? What a wide-open door of useful ministry in every community! Even if healing should not obtain, human interest and sympathy would be awakened. This must in turn create respect and apprecia-

tion in the sufferers which might lead them to seek the deep things of God. The prayer of faith for the sick should be exercised for the advancement of the work of salvation. It will give boldness in proclaiming the Word, as the Lord co-operates in "stretching forth his hand to heal that signs and wonders may be done in the name of the holy child Jesus." What an opportunity is offered in every community to radiate the light and life of Christ in words of comfort and cheer in the sickroom. The pastor, full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, can extend his influence a hundredfold in the ministry of healing, and lead the people on to a higher plane of spiritual experience. With a knowledge of spiritual verities, keeping always in harmony with spiritual forces, faith will become easy in this kind of service. Such inspiration will quicken thought and enliven the ministry of preaching and make the sermons more effective. The church should be a place where the sick and suffering, the tried and tempted, the discouraged and broken-hearted, may find shelter, comfort, peace and strength for the battle of life.

THE CHURCH

The burden of the church should rest heavily upon the shoulders of every believer. Even the waywardness of backsliding and wrong in the church should not lead to discouraging criticism, but rather to prayer and travail of soul. This surely was the attitude of our Lord amid the worldliness and sin of His own people. How He wept over His own great city. How He looked with tender compassion upon the multitude. How He loved the Church and gave Himself for it. Listen to that heart cry from the great apostle Paul, "night and day praying exceedingly," "with tears," and then again, "striving ac-

cording to his working, which worketh in me mightily." Hear him in his desperation crying, "I could wish myself accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh." Such kind of praying will bring again Zion from her wandering and spiritual captivity to a better land of freedom and power.

REVIVALS

How we need revivals. Repeated and frequent revivals. But be it remembered that revivals are promoted by prayer rather than preaching. True revivals have ever been the result of earnest and continued prayer. A careful review will show that all great revivals may be traced to some company or someone who was able to hold steadily on in faith believing in the face of great spiritual deadness. The heart cry of Habakkuk has been the earnest cry before the outbreak of many a revival. "O Lord, revive thy work." The "O" cry of the soul is an expression when no other word can be found to express the depth of sorrow or anguish. When the need for help is so great, and the pain so intense, the mental concentration so real, everything else so far gone; then no words can be found to express the inward cry, save this all-inclusive word "O." When the church is willing to pay the price in continued fasting and prayer, and then reaches this deep soul cry, "O Lord, revive thy work," something will happen,—a glorious revival will be the result.

It has been stated, and we are inclined to believe it is true, that any church, anywhere, any time, can have a revival when spiritual conditions are met, and spiritual forces are unhindered; provided believers will pay the price.

That price is prayer and fasting in deep humility

before the Lord. If there is a question, then try it out in your church. Get two-thirds of the church to unite in a month of prayer. Pray every night until midnight. The last week have continued prayer by turns or relays all day and all night, with some days of fasting. Hold steadily on in faith and devotion. Observe conditions, walk in the light as the light is given, watch and pray, study the correct combinations of spiritual forces like faith, hope and love,—supreme love to God and unselfish love to our fellowmen. It would not take a prophet to guarantee the result. A mighty revival, sweeping revival, strong and deep, usually follows such conditions, the influence of which will be wide-spread and abiding. What a gracious door of opportunity is open for believers. How glorious to share in such a gracious work of grace among men. O believers, shall we not awake to this possibility and become workers together with God in the redemption of the world?

PRAYER FOR MISSIONARIES

Paul, the great missionary of the cross, expressed his earnest desire, requesting prayers, "Pray for me that an effectual door may be opened for me." Then we are asked to pray for those whose faces we have not seen—the converts won by the missionaries. These heroic men and women have left all to enter new and untried fields of service. Dangers often beset their pathway. Sacrifice and privation meet them at every turn in their course. Deprived of the comforts of civilization, often alone amid opposing forces, and tempted on every side; they surely need the strong arms of faith and prayer from the church at home to support them in the conflict. What a field for intercessory prayer in the church at home. But so often

these courageous men and women are completely forgotten and neglected. The prayermeeting should be filled with constant reminders of these missionary heroes of faith. Constant and united prayer should be made every week by the church for their success and the establishment of the converts in the grace of God, "praying for those whose face we have not seen in the flesh."

There are very few in these days who spend many all nights of prayer. Yet the testimony of those who have, prove there is great profit in spiritual blessing. They have found the sweetness of these words, "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength." We fear the missionaries have often suffered because of the faithlessness of the church at home. Shall we not be inspired to continue in prayer for the workers in distant lands and on the foreign shores? It remains yet to be known what could be accomplished if the church would faithfully apply the mighty forces of faith which worketh by love's strong passion. The prayer of faith will subdue kingdoms, work righteousness, and obtain the fulfillment of promises. We believe the prayer of faith which accomplished such wonders as recorded in the eleventh of Hebrews, will close the angry mouths of the roaring lions in modern criticism; quench the violent flames of harsh and unfriendly denunciations of truth; and in seeming weakness take the jawbone of simple exhortation and become strong and mighty in bringing down rebellious hearts to an altar of prayer. We feel sure that faith which comes boldly to a throne of grace, trusting in the mighty arm of Jehovah, will wax valiant in the fight and turn the battle line of seeming defeat into mightier forces which will put to flight the armies of darkness, will bring life

out of death and encircle the black clouds of the receding storms with the rainbow of resurrection hope. The peace and prosperity of our own beloved nation are the all-conquering forces of evangelism through mighty faith and prayer which will precipitate sweeping revivals of righteousness in society. Let the church destroy the altars of Baal and build again the altars of God in the home and in the church and we shall witness again the falling fire as in Elijah's day.

PRAYING FOR PROSPERITY

Much of human desire expressed in prayer clusters around personal needs, for personal vietory and for prosperity. Is it right for one to pray and expect prosperity in business? There can be no question but God would have His people enjoy prosperity in all undertakings, not only in spiritual things but in health and material blessings. That happy man described in the first Psalm has this clear promise, "And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." Then note the following promises: "Then shall thy barns be filled with plenty and thy winepresses burst forth with new wine." "I will rebuke the devourer for your sake." "All nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land."

"There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling." In claiming these gracious promises and many more like them, we must not forget the conditions and principles involved: "Because he trusteth in him," or again, "Bring all the tithes into the storehouse." Remember it is after the tithes are gathered in that we have this promise, "I will open the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing that there

shall not be room enough to receive it." God's people, when they walk in obedience, are expected to be a glad, happy, victorious, prosperous company of believers.

When we are praying for prosperity, we must be very careful that the purpose is all for the glory of God and the advancement of His cause in the earth. With prosperity comes great responsibility, and usually severe temptations. Happy is that man who can enjoy prosperity and retain liberality and deep humility. It would be much better to remain poor than to be lost in the awful maze of "the deceitfulness of riches," and thus become self-willed and independent, careless and self-indulgent, proud and haughty, thus losing the sweetness of divine fellowship. Should prosperity be given it will be well for us to remember, "That every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

GUIDANCE AND PROTECTION

In praying for divine guidance we are in a wide-open field of need as well as privilege. We may voice our petition with one of old, "Lead me in a plain path." Prayer for guidance and protection, "lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil," is one of the important petitions in the prayer our Lord taught His disciples. It is well for us to build our cry for guidance upon some clear promise and study carefully the conditions stated. Take this clear promise for a moment's study: "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." We may place all the emphasis possible on the last words in this promise, "He shall direct

thy paths," when we have studied the clearly stated conditions. Notice the following:

1. We are to *trust*.
2. This trust must be in our *heart*.
2. We must trust *with all* our heart.
4. We must have no confidence in our understanding, not even to lean: *"Lean not unto thine own understanding."*
5. Give careful attention to our ways, consider their rightness or wrongness.
6. Then in *all thy ways acknowledge God*. "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness," and then all things shall be added.
7. The conditions all met, we have the promise, "He shall direct thy paths."

In the very same way we may seek divine protection. "The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him." With the heart conditions right we may rest in His promise: "The angel of the Lord encampeth around about them that fear him and delivereth them."

Every undertaking, every business in life, in all work or pleasure; every new departure, calling, vocation should become a subject of prayer; and then we should rest only in the will of God. Before our Lord chose His twelve disciples, He spent an all night of prayer. This question may arise, How shall I know the will of God or His leading in any particular matter? We may rest assured that "We shall know if we follow on to know."

We can not go by impressions. We must try the spirits. In seeking divine guidance a few rules may help

us to find the will of God. We are now presuming that heart conditions are right with God, and there is sincere willingness to follow on to know. The following propositions may assist us:

1. There must be harmony with revealed truth.
2. There should be harmony with divine methods. Has God thus dealt with others?
3. There should be harmony also with the convictions of devoted believers.
4. It is vital that there should be harmony with open doors and attending providences.
5. There should be special favor and divine pleasure in the direction under consideration.
6. As we move in line with the understood leading, there should be increasing peace and joy. When the heart is troubled and questions arise then it is well to move with caution.
7. Through all the above six propositions, there should be an inward conviction of the Spirit's presence. Thus if we follow on to know we can not make great mistakes while praying for divine guidance.

UNITED PRAYER

The power of united faith when believers are of one heart and one soul can not well be estimated. We know that united faith in the application of spiritual worship is one of the most important facts in successful prayer. Christ urged this one condition with great emphasis: "If two of you shall be agreed on earth as touching anything they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven." The crowning desire expressed by our Lord before His crucifixion was, "That they may be one, even as we are one: I in them and thou in me, that

they may be made perfect in one." Such beautiful oneness in heart purpose, and desire must bring results. What possibilities await believers who will unitedly pray the prayer of faith. It yet remains to be known what can be accomplished if believers will only throw aside the non-essentials which often separate them, and come together in one heart and soul to hold steadily in faith and prayer.

We should encourage prayer circles, and prayer leagues, and prayer bands. Instead of organizing so many ball clubs and outing parties, and athletic contests, we believe it would be much better to train our people in the art of prayer and a better application of spiritual forces. A live, praying church filled with prayer circles among the old and the young will awaken interest and produce a constant revival. How glorious the scene, both for heaven and earth, when the pastor and his church unite in prayer in all departments, "night and day praying exceedingly." The church will soon become a bee-hive of activity. Such "laboring together in prayer" will produce an atmosphere of holy devotion which will send forth an influence like the sweet aroma from the altar of incense.

Spiritual pastors and churches should be noted for their knowledge of conditions and relations of spiritual principles, and the correct application of spiritual verities in faith, hope and love, and be able to demonstrate the facts of truth as revealed in experience. Every church should be a wide-open door into heavenly things, with the church doors always open where prayer is wont to be made. Every church should become a center for constant broadcasting of faith waves, and the radiating of light rays of truth, thus sending forth the gospel over the cur-

rents of love and devotion. Not only from a literal radio station for the preaching of the Word, but more truly in the spiritual light and heat waves of holy power which may be more effective than any material radiation of sound waves. What we need is a new revelation of the reality of spiritual forces and their possibilities through the ministry of faith and prayer. God is waiting for men of faith and devotion to enter the throne room of power and open the loaded storehouses filled with the riches of His grace provided in the redemption of His Son. The world is suffering, dying for the gospel, while the careless church fools her time away in her playhouse of sports. There is a mighty revival now due and waiting when the church shall be awakened to her possibilities of spiritual power in the presence of the Holy Ghost.

MEDITATION, COMMUNION

"In thy law do I meditate day and night." "The communion of the Holy Ghost be with you." Holy stillness, quiet meditation, carry mighty forces in the spiritual realm. Holy communion is perfect adjustment with spiritual conditions. Perfect and harmonious relationship with the divine. This is perfect rest, perfect peace, fullness of joy, and love enthroned. Here faith is easy and victory sure.

"Be still and know that I am God." All discords are hushed. The will runs in peaceful harmony with the sweet will of God like a river winding its way through the mountains. Trials and difficulties may pile up mountain high, but the submitted will finds its way forward to the bosom of God like a river finding its way to the ocean. Holy communion is one of the greatest character building forces known to man. "Building up yourselves on your

most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost." Here faith becomes a mighty medium for the flashing light of holy presence, while strength and courage flow through the convictions of the soul. Here simplicity and sincerity thrive like flowers in the tropics, while kindness and courtesy burst forth like flowers in springtime, and grace and gentleness sparkle like polished diamonds. Holy refinement and tender compassion grip the whole being, while looking into the face of Jesus Christ. "We all with open face beholding the glory of the Lord are changed into the same image from glory to glory as by the Spirit of the Lord."

"Not a sound disturbs the stillness,
Not a form invades the scene;
Save the form of my beloved,
And the person of my King.

"Precious, gentle, holy Jesus,
Blessed Bridegroom of my heart,
In Thy secret inner chambers,
Thou wilt whisper what thou art.

"Wrapped in deep, adoring silence,
Jesus, Lord, I dare not move;
Lest I lose the faintest whisper,
Meant to catch the ear of love.

"Rest then, O my soul contented,
Thou hast found thy happy place,
In the bosom of thy Savior,
Gazing up in His dear face."